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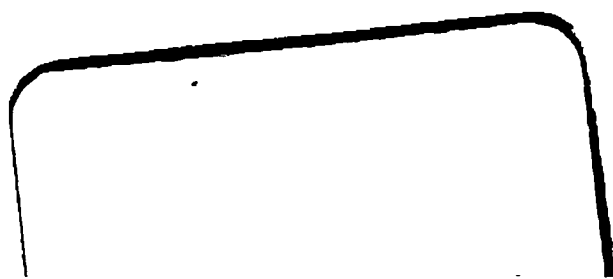
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LONDON SOCIETY.

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.



VOLUME IV.

LONDON:

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LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY, 1863.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER.
A London Story.

CHAPTER I.

THE ADVERTISEMENT.

I HAD what I may call *no end* of answers to my advertisement, though I had put it in such a form as I hoped would attract the select few.

The advertisement was for partial board and lodging in a respectable family. It occupied a conspicuous place in the 'Times' supplement, and had been composed regardless of expense. Smith and I made it out together, after a capital dinner at the 'London,' and as Smith is a literary man, and writes for 'Punch,' you may be sure it *was* rather out of the common run.

Nevertheless, on that memorable morning I found no less than twenty letters on my breakfast-table; the next post brought in twenty more, and so on every two hours during the rest of the day. I was offered the best accommodation, the most comfortable of homes, the most excellent cooking, at all terms, in every part of the town, and in all kinds of grammar, writing, and spelling.

One lady, who lived at Hammer-smith (I had mentioned the locality required as within ten minutes' drive of Regent Street), informed me that hers might truly be termed a comfortable home, as she was blessed with six daughters, all musical.

Another, who dated her note from Tottenham Court Road, described her house as delightfully situated, the chamber I was to occupy looking out on the road, where the 'busses passed every minute, making it look pleasant and cheerful. In a post-script she also informed me that there were eggs for breakfast every morning. Another, writing in a stiff angular hand, promised everything I required, with the addition of family prayers. One informed me, as a kind of attractive bait, I suppose, that she was a young widow, who, finding 'the solitude of home irksome, received two or three persons of station and refinement.'

Smith and I read over the whole lot very attentively, and, as Smith said, it was as good as a sermon, for

it showed you what an immense amount of lies and humbug, ah! and trouble, too, there is in the world. It took us a couple of hours to finish the reading of them, what with the jokes and witticisms of my friend, and the more sensible remarks of myself. I am a grave man, not much given to laughter or fun, but what I pride myself on is my exquisite sense of the elegant and beautiful. I hate vulgarity; I dread a vulgar man or woman as I dread the devil. I could not live near such a creature if my life depended on it, and, to confess the truth (Smith calls this a weakness), it was on that account I was going to leave my present mode of life as a bachelor in lodgings to become a boarder in a 'refined and well-educated family;' so the advertisement ran.

My lodgings were all I could wish, clean, well furnished, in a respectable square, and Mrs. Meggs was an excellent cook; but then she was so decidedly vulgar.

She would come into my room in the morning to know if I intended dining at home, and what I would like for dinner, with her immense form enveloped in a gown made of bed curtains, or stuff like it; her cap half off, her red hair in curl-papers, and her nose—well, all I can say is, Mrs. Meggs did like gin—she confessed to it. Now, if there is one thing more vulgar than another, it's certainly gin. She would rest her hand on her hips and salute me with 'Good morning, Muster Wist; and what'll you please to want to-day? Why you've not eaten your heggs again!' This took place regularly every morning, as Mrs. Meggs insisted on serving me with eggs, which I can't endure, but to which, rather than have a conversation with her on the subject, I had submitted to for long months. If this had been all, I should not have minded so much, but Mrs. Meggs could not, by any manner of means, short of actual force, be induced to leave the room till she had set it what she called 'a bit comfortable;' and during

that time no one knows what I endured from that woman's vulgarity. Subjects the holiest, the most sublime, on which I had written papers that had drawn tears from the coldest, were hashed, mangled, degraded in every form by that vulgar woman.

Some might have called her a philosopher—her views of life were certainly sharply defined and expressed—but I called her vulgar; she herself said, 'I'm no green un, I aint.'

If Mrs. Meggs had kept her tortures for my private moments, I could have borne it, but she had no sense of propriety. At no time was I safe from that dreadful woman's intrusion. When I had friends calling, when I had friends dining, at any time, or under any circumstances, I was never safe from Mrs. Meggs's dreadful jokes and dreadful sarcasms.

Sometimes it would be in smiling, pleasant manner to bring up the coals; at others with a severe look, to know if any 'gent' was 'hill,' as the bell was 'ranged' like to break it, and bring the house down. And once or twice it was *after* Mrs. Meggs had been to call on her friend who lived in the City Road near the 'Eagle.'

All my friends knew my foible; and the compliments I received on the choice of my landlady were incessant and cutting, and so at length I inserted the advertisement.

Smith and I carefully set aside the worst spelt and written, and in the most objectionable localities, and then getting into a 'Hansom,' determined to devote a few hours to answer the other notes in person.

We went first to the 'young widow.' She was civil, and not bad-looking, but things looked what Smith called skimp; so after ten minutes' conversation, in which I promised to take her obliging offer into consideration, we took our leave. I heard her say to Smith in the passage, 'I have taken a great fancy to your friend; I should like him very much to join our little party.'

Smith said it was 'blarney.' I rather liked that widow.

Then we drove to Russell Square, and then to Marylebone Road, Devon-

shire Street, &c., &c. I found all the people miserably poor, or dreadfully vulgar.

'It's more difficult than I thought,' I said to Smith, as after dinner we smoked our cigars at the open windows, 'and it's shocking to find vulgarity so prevalent among the middle classes of England.'

Puff, puff, went Smith's cigar as a reply; and I was just about to commence a rather long discourse on the subject when the postman's knock made us start.

'Some more, I suppose,' I said to Smith.

I heard Mrs. Meggs coming up stairs. I was frightened. I had not yet taken my landlady into my confidence, and I feared she would suspect. 'Another hanswer to the advertisement, Muster Wist,' she said, in a dry bitter tone, and with a scornful toss of her head. I said humbly, 'Thank you, Mrs. Meggs,' and I assure you in that instant Mrs. Meggs was not vulgar, and there was almost dignity in the way she went out of the room. There was something about her which said, 'I've discovered your treachery, and I scorn you as you deserve.'

'Under different circumstances, Smith,' I began to observe, 'that woman might have——'

'Oh, yes, no doubt, but open the "hanswer," old fellow,' interrupted my friend.

It was written in a gentleman's handwriting—the first male letter I had received. It ran, 'A private family, residing at H—— Terrace, can offer the accommodation advertised for in yesterday's "Times." If E. W. will appoint a time, the gentleman will call on him, to give any information that may be desired, or should E. W. prefer calling at H—— Terrace, he will be received any time after 7 o'clock P.M. or before 10 A.M.'

'Devilish cool, I must say,' said Smith, slowly, as I finished reading. 'I'd almost bet it's a case of genteel poverty.'

'Before ten in the morning, too! Ridiculous!' I said. We were both silent for a moment, then Smith looked at his watch. 'Eight o'clock. West,' said he, impressively, 'I'm

very much mistaken if this,' and he thumped the letter, 'isn't your man: there's no vulgarity here, you may depend. It's clearly written; no humbug; within the distance of Regent Street you named, and not sent off in that devilish snatch-at-him haste all the rest of them are. Lewis, my boy, put on your hat. Your partial board and lodging is to be found at H—— Terrace.'

I was deeply impressed by Smith's manner as well as words, and so I silently put on my hat, and out we went together. H—— Terrace was a short but not narrow street, running out of —— Road. The houses were small, but not mean-looking, and from the dining-room window of No. 3 issued a pleasant, private, family-looking light.

'I do believe I've found it, Smith,' said I, as I knocked. We could hear a slight rustling in the passage, and a female voice said, 'Phil, come in, sir, directly!' and then a door banged, and all was still.

I sent in my card with the 'Answer,' by the servant girl, and then the back-parlour door opened, and a gentleman with a remarkably neat-looking small head, but dressed with more regard to ease than elegance, came forward and bowed. I said something about advertisement in 'Times,' and the gentleman begged me to walk in.

It was a small room, certainly, and not very well furnished: the gentleman was very grave, but he *was* a gentleman. I could see that, not only by his own manner, but by the way in which Smith addressed him. Smith instinctively scents out a man's position, and treats him accordingly.

The gentleman said he was a widower, with grown-up daughters and two younger children; that being rather reduced in circumstances, he wished to let some of his house, but that he could also give partial board if required. That room, he said, would always be at my private disposal if I desired, otherwise I could join the family circle. The room was not very inviting, and the bedroom was gloomy, and for these and breakfast and supper the grave gentleman asked thirty-five shillings a week.

It was a good deal; but then I

thought they didn't seem vulgar or very poor. Still I hesitated. We were all three sitting in the back parlour, rather silent, the gentleman, with one hand in his trousers pocket, looking very grave and stern. I think it was really a trial for him to have to treat on such matters, and I dare say he thought sadly of the 'family circle' about to be broken, and the poor dear grown-up daughters. Still he was firm to the thirty-five shillings. Smith looked grim, too, and I was equally unsmiling-looking, when suddenly a merry voice in the next room said, 'What a time that wretch stays!'

I rose immediately. 'I fear, sir, your terms are rather beyond my means; however, if you will allow me to consider and call to-morrow evening, I shall be obliged.'

'As you please, sir,' the gentleman replied. 'As I said before, my object in admitting strangers into my family is remuneration. Good-night, gentlemen.' He closed the door behind us, and we went towards the passage. We heard a foot on the stairs, and then a tall young person brushed by, and went to open the hall door.

The young person wore no cap, her hair was plaited in thick plaits on either side of her face, and as she laid one thin soft-looking hand on the handle, she looked up at us, the remains of a smile of intense fun still lingering on her face. She opened the door. 'Hum!' said Smith, in a very pleasant and respectful tone, and raising his hat; 'can you tell us if there is a cab-stand near?'

'I don't know; but there are always plenty of cabs in the —— Road,' replied the voice, softly, that had called me a wretch. 'Oh, ah! thank you,' said Smith, lingering a little; but the young person looked sedately down at the door handle: so once again raising his hat, Smith said, 'Good evening;' and we went down the steps.

'Lewis,' he exclaimed, 'you, who profess to have such an intense admiration for the sublime and beautiful, are an immense humbug!'

'I'm obliged to you,' I answered, stiffly.

Drawn by T. Morten.

"She looked up at us, the remains of a smile of intense fun on her face."

(See "The First Time I saw Her.")

'Did you observe that young person who opened the door?' he asked, after a pause.

'Yes; a pretty-enough girl for a housemaid.'

'And the father?'

'Genteel poverty,' I answered, curtly.

'Lewis West,' said my friend, impressively, 'it was the beautiful and sublime.'

CHAPTER II.

THE YOUNG PERSON IN THE OMNIBUS.

The next day I was going down to the city in an omnibus, still very undecided what to do about my board and lodging, when who should get in and take the seat opposite to me but the young person with plaits from No. 3 H— Terrace. She was accompanied by a very young man, something between a man and a boy, but not altogether a hobbledoy, for the young fellow had something self-possessed and pleasant about him that showed, though young, he knew a little more than mere school life could have taught him. His sister, for I saw the young person was his sister, gave me one keen look out of a pair of dark handsome eyes, and then turned away. She looked very grave to-day. Last night I thought her seventeen or eighteen, to day I could have sworn she was twenty-three or twenty-four.

It was not the sedate gravity either some girls put on in public conveyances; there was something dogged yet sad about it: the boy, too, looked uneasy.

I thought of the meanly-furnished back parlour, and the reduced circumstances, and then I noticed the young person held a book in her hand—a French grammar. 'Probably a governess,' I thought. Now, practically, I detest governesses; theoretically, I esteem them.

In books, and newspaper articles, and educational reviews, I have read enough to draw tears from stones, of the excellences and hardships of these deserving females. I have been perfectly persuaded that in spite of appearances they were elegant women; that in spite of snub-

bing they were generally esteemed by the estimable, and in a word they were real ladies; but, practically—well all I can say is, that among no class have I met with more vulgarity. Smith says—he said it as he was smoking a cigar and drinking his third glass of grog, and Smith becomes very tender and reasonable under such circumstances—'The class you speak of, my dear West, is a frightfully mixed class; you can no more define a woman's rank by saying she's a governess than you can describe her personal appearance. These are of all sorts, and, more shame to us, the lower sort greatly preponderate; the real ladies are at the rate of five per cent.; if, therefore, you do find the general run vulgar, it is not astonishing.'

Well, I thought of these words of Smith as I sat opposite the young person. I certainly tried to set her among the five per cent., for I must confess there was something in the carriage of the head, in the cast of the features, which I dared not for an instant call vulgar; but then her gloves, her old shawl, her almost dirty dress, all so untidily put on! I always picture a real lady, neat.

As the omnibus approached Tottenham Court Road the young person pulled out her purse and gave her brother sixpence to pay for both.

'I shall walk home, Willie,' she said, 'unless I succeed; but you, if she's in a bad temper, I shan't ask. Stop the man here. Good-bye, and don't forget the cocoa, and coffee, and sugar.'

Her brother helped her out, but she needed little assistance, and afterwards I saw her skipping across the dirty road, with her dress caught up so as to expose all the wires of her crinoline, utterly heedless of the effect it might have on the public or me.

I went to the City, and did my business, which was to go to the Bank, and returned home just at a time when the omnibuses were very empty; and indeed, just before we reached Tottenham Court Road, I had the 'bus' all to myself. I couldn't help wondering if the young person had succeeded, and

would drive home. As I neared the corner, lo! and behold! there she stood on the edge of the pavement, among a group of questionable-looking people waiting for our arrival.

She jumped in with a spring, and I noticed she held the purse in her hand, as if to keep it safe, for it was much fuller than in the morning; and in its bulging sides, and in her contented and now young-looking face, I read a little history. And would you believe it, my heart hardened within me, and I determined not to go to No. 3, H—— Terrace. Think of the misery there must be, that will darken the faces of the grown-up daughters, and sour the papa! Distress can't dwell in a house without directly or indirectly annoying every one of its inmates, whispered my egotistical self. As I was thinking all this over, and looking most determinedly out of the window, the young person suddenly broke in on my meditations with—

'Can I take any message for you to papa? it will save you the trouble of calling.'

'Thank you,' I stammered; 'but, to tell the truth, I am still undecided.' I looked up as I spoke. What a confounded fool I was to say I was undecided to that decided-looking girl. A ghost of a smile flitted across her face.

'Then we still have a chance?' she said. 'I'm glad of it, for papa's sake.'

'And not for yours,' I ventured to say—I hardly know why; but I could not help feeling I was talking to a pretty girl, and you know it is so difficult to keep to business in such cases.

'Well, no,' she answered coolly enough. 'You see we're a number of girls; we've always been accustomed to live easily and without restraint, and a stranger will necessarily be rather a bore; still,' she added quickly, 'I'd rather have a gentleman than a lady, and papa seems decided on one or the other.'

'Then after all, I shall be welcome,' I said pleasantly. I couldn't resist the voice.

'Yes, as the lesser evil,' was the laconic reply. 'Would you be at

home much?' she asked after a pause.

'No, and I could stay in the back parlour,' I replied, piqued.

'It isn't very comfortable, certainly,' she said; 'still——.' There was another pause; then suddenly she asked me if I had seen 'Our American Cousin,' and then she launched forth into a capital criticism on the play and actors; she was quite witty and her sarcasms keen; then suddenly she relapsed into silence, the 'bus' neared the Edgware Road, and she prepared to get out.

'Well,' she said, 'you shan't be banished to your back parlour. Shall I tell papa to call on you, or will you come to our house this evening, to settle everything?'

I was taken aback; I had not at all determined to take No. 3 for a home: still I never hesitated—I dared not, under that keen eye. 'Thank you, if Mr. Bush will call this evening at eight——'

'Oh, certainly. Good afternoon.' The young person quite smiled, I fancied, triumphantly; and I'm sure, notwithstanding my usual strict sense of honour, if I could have washed my hands of No. 3, H—— Terrace, I certainly should—I felt such a profound dread of that young person.

Smith and Wells dropped in after dinner, and to them I recounted my omnibus adventure, without, however, mentioning how the young person had managed to extract my assent. I made up a most touching history of her seeming distress, and of youthful beauty, and rather put it on the head of kind-heartedness and charity, than of coercion, which in reality it was.

Smith didn't take much interest in the matter. Your witty brilliant individuals soon forget the affairs of their friends, when they cease to be amused by them, and what Smith warmly advocated one day he very often forgot the next.

This was a trait in my friend that would often have thrown a shadow over our friendship had it not been for my philosophy. 'Take things as you find them: if they don't please you, get out of their

way; but to attempt to correct or right them is a nuisance and a folly.' I wrote this in my note-book at sixteen years of age, and I confess at twenty-six I'm not ashamed of them; there is the germ of an amount of wisdom that would not have disgraced the teens of Solomon.

Wells is a very soft kind of fellow; my history really interested him. He asked all kinds of questions about the young person, and praised me vehemently for going to live at No. 3.

I regard Wells as an embryo philanthropist, if ever he has the courage or energy to emerge from boyhood. At present he is twenty-three, and yet you might certainly take him for seventeen; his face is as smooth as a girl's; he talks in a quiet, boyish manner, has an absurd reverence for everything other men laugh at, and yet all in such a quiet inoffensive manner, that I confess I can't call him an ass; it would seem as bad to abuse one's sister.

Well, Mr. Bush came; Smith smoked away soberly, and Wells lay full length on the sofa, contemplating us as we made our arrangements. Mr. Bush was still grave, but at times he condescended to make a facetious remark, and then I thought he looked very much like the young person.

CHAPTER III.

THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

It was on a pouring evening that I took up my abode at No. 3. The gutters ran like little rivers; the gas looked quite dim through the misty atmosphere, and scarcely a soul was to be seen abroad. The idea of a family circle on such a night was particularly pleasant.

I pictured to myself the drawing-room of No. 3, well lighted, with a glowing fire, two or three handsome girls collected near it, working, or talking to the respectable-looking papa, and perhaps an open piano, with a pretty performer who might accompany my much-admired tenor.

Alas for human expectations! A faint light issued from the kitchen window as I stopped at No. 3; all

the rest of the house was in darkness; even the hall lamp was not lighted, and I went stumbling into the passage over the servant-girl, and upset the umbrella-stand with a crash. The noise brought Mr. Bush with a candle and apologies; but as I followed him up-stairs to my bed-room I most devoutly thanked Heaven I was only bound for a month as lodger in H— Terrace.

I stayed fidgetting in my room for nearly an hour, and then, still feeling very cross and disagreeable, descended to the parlour.

On the stairs I met a figure dripping from every bugle: I never saw a person more 'completely saturated,' as the saying is. I stood sideways to let her pass, fearful of catching cold by her mere presence; but the young person lighting her candle, so that the light fell full on her wet hair and damp face, looked up at me with such a comical expression of amused contempt that I felt obliged to say something.

'How wet you are!' I said, shrinking back a little farther still.

'Yes, I couldn't get a 'bus, so I was obliged to walk from Tottenham Court Road—without an umbrella too.'

To hear her talk in that unrefined way, and yet to be under the gaze of such eyes, was like the action of two opposite and equal forces: so, following the laws of motion, I stood still.

'Do you know,' she said, after a pause, 'that your first act on entering the house was one of damage? You have broken the umbrella-stand.'

'Your own fault entirely,' I replied; 'the gas should have been lighted.'

'And wasn't it?'

'No.'

'Provoking!' she exclaimed, angrily; 'unless I am at home everything goes wrong. But you,' she added, 'must be very awkward. Why, I can go about anywhere in the dark.'

This was said quite gravely, so I felt offended.

'I suppose I can go into the parlour?' I said, stiffly.

'Oh yes—at least, oh no—the lamp's not lighted yet, and you'll go breaking something else. You must wait till I come down to light it.'

'I really must say,' I exclaimed, angrily, 'the way in which you treat me is most extraordinary.'

'You will find everything in this house is very extraordinary: at least according to your ideas,' answered the young person, coldly, moving up a step—'but if you don't like it you can leave it.'

'Of which permission I shall certainly avail myself,' I replied, haughtily.

She turned and looked down at me with those peculiar eyes of hers—then a satisfied kind of smile swept across her face, making it look absolutely beautiful for a moment. 'As you please,' she said; 'all I request is, that you don't mention it to my father till the end of the week.'

She moved on another step or two; then she paused, apparently considering something. 'Come up,' she said; 'I will show you a room to wait in till I go down to light the lamp.' Angry as I felt, there was something about the girl's voice, when she spoke in her natural tone, that I could not help yielding to; so, very sulkily, I followed her up to the second story.

She opened the door of a small room, telling me to come in, and then, dripping as she was, stood and lighted a small but very elegant lamp on the table, and then went to the grate and lit the fire.

She never spoke, but went about her work with the speed and skill of one quite accustomed to it. Meanwhile I looked round the room.

There were bookcases, a pair of globes, a number of small plaster-of-Paris busts, some plants, a cage of birds, a glass globe with goldfish, a table, a large arm-chair that gave one the idea it had some mysterious way of turning itself into a bed, and two cane chairs. The furniture struck me.

'There,' said the young person, as the fire broke out into a bright flame, 'that will burn.'

'Thank you,' I said, politely. 'But really I am very selfish to keep you here in your wet clothes.'

'How kind you are!' she replied; 'but what a pity it is you didn't think of it before!' And with a glance, the nature of which I can only describe as exceedingly unpleasant, the young person went out of the room, and left me to my meditations.

That the young person, or lady, or whatever she was, disliked, and in a great measure despised me, I felt only too certain. Now I don't mind being disliked. We dislike things that are injurious to us; and being capable of injuring rather implies superiority. But to be despised is exceedingly disagreeable—particularly by an object universal opinion pronounces inferior.

As I thought over the whole history of our short acquaintance, an idea struck me.

The young person had candidly acknowledged to me the dislike she and all her sisters entertained for the plan of taking lodgers. She had also said that her father being determined on it they were obliged to give in. Suppose the neglect and rudeness of the family on my arrival was a little scheme of the young ladies to dislodge me—make me leave of my own accord, and so prove to their father the unfeasibility of his plan!

I thought of the scrutinizing glance of the young person when we met in the omnibus, as if she were studying my disposition most carefully; and of her after-determination to get me as a lodger; adding all this to her present snubs and rudeness, and to her request that I should not speak to her father till the end of the week, I felt quite inclined to this opinion.

All my friends say I am a firm man (foes call me obstinate), and the idea of this silent kind of war roused me. It should be war on both sides. I would neither fly or demand peace. Man and woman's wit should fight it out. So I decreed. Once determined, I threw myself in the arm-chair, and tried to form some plan of defence.

I could not determine whether to brave it out and put the dear grown-up daughters to their wits' end for a means to get rid of me, or

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to do the *aimable*—make them all in love with me, and then one morning make my triumphant bow and exit.

I walked about the room thinking it over, and by chance I stopped before the collection of little busts. I found them arranged in groups according to their epochs, and each epoch subdivided into classes of poets, historians, philosophers, &c.

Then I wandered on to the bookcase: there were scientific, historical, and poetical works, beside a large number of novels. As I stood beside the bookcase the door opened quickly, and the young person appeared. Her hair was neatly arranged in thick plaits on each side of her face—what dress she wore I could not discover, for she was wrapped in a large black shawl. If anything looks untidy to wear in the house, in my estimation, it is a shawl.

‘You can come down now,’ she said. So we went out of the room together.

‘I had better take your arm to guide you to a seat,’ said the young person, as we reached the parlour door; ‘and I will tell papa to restrain his civilities till I bring the lamp.’

She put her hand on my arm, and I felt very much inclined to press it as a punishment for her freedom.

The room was not quite dark, and I could just distinguish two or three forms through the gloom.

‘You had better not move, papa, till we have lights,’ said my conductress; ‘it annoys Mr. West to make any movement in the dark. You are close to the sofa, and may safely sit down,’ she added to me.

When the lamp came, borne by the servant-girl, and followed by the young person, I discovered no less than four grown-up daughters in the room, the very young man of the omnibus, and the papa. That was the family circle.

Mr. Bush received me cordially enough, but the young ladies seemed either shy or sulky.

The young person went to a distant corner, where the youngest daughter sat in a pillowed arm-chair, and began talking to her in such

a low tone that I could not catch a word. But it must have been interesting, to judge from the brightening looks of her pale listener.

One of the girls proceeded to make tea, and to hold a distant, unconcerned kind of conversation with me on the state of the weather; while the eldest lounged in her chair opposite me, and apparently found great satisfaction in shading her eyes from the light with both hands, her elbows resting on the table, while she read the newspaper. Once she looked up at me, and then I saw one of the most beautiful faces I have ever met in this living, breathing world. It was like a picture—one of Raphael’s Madonnas warmed into life.

‘It will be too late to go upstairs to-night—if you don’t make haste with the tea, Emily,’ said the young person suddenly.

‘It’s your own fault if we are late, Edith,’ answered the tea-maker, nowise hurrying. ‘You came home so late, and have been so long undressing.’

Edith—for so I found the young person was called—came up to the table with rather a stormy look about the eyes, but she didn’t say anything.

‘No music to-night, anyhow, for me,’ she exclaimed, taking a cup of tea, and sitting down by me. ‘Do you care for music, Mr. West?’

Of course I was an enthusiast about it. Every man who thinks he can sing is.

‘Well, I give you leave to play on my piano when you like, which, let me tell you, was not in the terms of the agreement.’

I scarcely knew what to reply. The tone was not gracious, so I should like to have refused her offered favour bluntly, after her own fashion; but a man can’t be rude to a girl in the presence of her father. So I said nothing.

‘You are scarcely polite, Edith,’ said Mr. Bush, suddenly joining in our conversation. ‘Agreements of the kind we made with Mr. West should not be constantly mentioned. Besides, neither party, as yet, have acted in a take-and-give manner.’

Edith shrugged her shoulders. ‘I

always thought business arrangements were to be treated in a business manner,' she replied.

I remembered my determination made in the little room upstairs, so I turned to the young lady:

'Thank you; but I mean to order a piano for myself. I suppose you will have no objection to its being placed in my own room or the back parlour. Truth to tell, I am very particular as to what instrument I use. I have an exceedingly delicate ear.'

'Really!' laconically replied Miss Edith, as she rose from the table with the amused look in her eyes, and a glance at the organ in question.

'Nelly,' she added, in a soft, kind voice, and going to the girl in the arm-chair, 'will you like to come upstairs now?' As the young girl rose from her seat, and walked arm-in-arm with her sister across the room, I saw by her manner that she was blind.

It was not a blindness that made the delicate face dreadful. The violet eyes were open, and fringed with such long dark lashes that, keeping them half closed, as she always did, one could almost have imagined that it was the dreamy, hazy look of short sight. And she had that sweet, sad expression about her face that so often accompanies blindness.

As she passed all the family rose and kissed her, and Edith led her to me. 'Good-night,' she said, with a smile. It was the first that had been bestowed on me since my arrival, and I treasured it accordingly.

CHAPTER IV.

WOMAN'S WIT.

THE next morning, when I came down to breakfast, I found only Mr. Bush, Agnes, and Emily. The table was laid with care, but the service did not all match—the butter was served on a plate instead of a proper dish, and the spoons were—well! they were *not* silver. Emily headed the table, and Agnes sat opposite to me, eating bread-and-butter

in a lazy manner, and occasionally casting inquisitive glances at me. I felt as if she were counting how many chops and how much bread-and-butter I ate, for Edith to calculate the expense of my breakfast. I was ashamed of my appetite, yet I determined to eat as much as I could, were it only out of malice.

Towards the end of breakfast, the young person (I can't help calling her the young person—it comes so naturally) came in for an instant with her bonnet and shawl on, and squeezing her fingers into gloves evidently suffering from last night's wetting.

'Good morning,' she said. 'I'm off, papa. If I don't return by six o'clock, don't wait dinner for me.' Then she popped out again, and I heard her slam the door and run down the steps with the speed of lightning.

In the evening, I saw about as much of Edith as I had on the previous one, and the other young ladies not making any advances towards cordiality, I found it slow. Emily was the most talkative, but she was stupid; and beautiful as Agnes was, I grew tired of merely looking at her. The next day was the same, and so on for a week. I felt I was living in a private family, but I certainly was not of them. The woman's wit was having the best of it. I was bound for a month; but I began to waver about carrying on such an unexciting kind of war.

Saturday, I happened to come home earlier than usual, and then, to my astonishment, I heard Edith's voice on the stairs. We met. 'Ah!' she said, in a pleasant voice, 'Saturday is a half holiday for you, too, then?'

'I always take one, certainly,' I replied.

'And I am *given* mine. Well, as long as we get it, the how or why is of no consequence, I suppose.' As she spoke, she began rolling up her sleeves, and then I noticed she had got her dress pinned up as cooks have when they wash down the steps of a house.

'What are you going to do?' I asked, in a very respectful manner.

'Make the pies for to-morrow, to

be sure. I can assure you, you wouldn't like Ann's pastry.'

'And is that how you employ your half-holiday?' I asked, almost sorrowfully.

'What are you going to do?' she asked, by way of reply.

'To take a ride in Rotten Row,' I answered.

'And is that how you employ your half-holiday?' And down stairs she ran, swift as an antelope, passing her hand along the balustrades. When she arrived at the bottom, she stopped, and held up her white hand. 'I forgot to dust them,' she exclaimed; 'now I must wash my hands again.' She said it in such a natural tone that I was disgusted. And then my horse came to the door; and happening to look down at the kitchen as I mounted, I saw the young person standing with her arms in a yellow basin, and her hands all doughy, just before the window, and she looked up and smiled in the most quizzical impertinent manner possible.

The next day was Sunday. Breakfast was later, and all assembled to it—even the blind girl. She sat by Edith, and I noticed the constant but quiet attention Edith paid her. It was a much livelier party than usual; even Agnes roused a little, and spoke, though in a quiet, lazy manner, as if the exertion was almost intolerable. Emily was very nearly brilliant, and poor Nelly laughed and joked so joyously with Willie. I began to feel less strange among them, and was trying to talk to Edith, when a low double knock came at the door.

'Go and open the door, Willie; it's Mr. Grainger's knock,' said Emily.

'Why can't you let Ann go?' exclaimed Edith, impatiently, but too late, for Willie was off, and in a moment returned with a rather handsome man.

His was one of those refined chiselled faces which immediately give you the idea of intellect; but I thought the harmony of the countenance much disturbed by the keen, restless eyes, and the sarcastic turn of the thin-lipped mouth. Mr. Bush received him with a kind of constrained cordiality.

Edith put out her hand, and said, in the gracious but easily free manner so characteristic of the true lady, 'Come and sit by me, Mr. Grainger; you favour the others week days, so Sunday is mine by rights.'

I did not at all approve of the confidential smile the gentleman for a moment turned on Edith, as he took his place beside her. Her father didn't see it, but Mr. Grainger seemed to care very little if I witnessed it or not.

After his arrival, Edith's conversation was less than ever for me.

We sat over breakfast till the bells began to ring for morning service, and still no one offered to move. Edith and Grainger talked on perpetually, keeping almost all the conversation to themselves, while we listened. Edith's manner was completely changed. She was gay, courteous, and perfectly lady-like. I could scarcely believe her to be identical with the young person I had met in the dripping condition on the stairs, and who I had seen yesterday making pies in front of the kitchen window. Mr. Bush spoke little, and he seemed relieved when I, tired of the very unobtrusive part I was playing, rose from the table, pleading an engagement; and he left the room with me.

How long Mr. Grainger stayed, I know not. When I came home to dinner at six o'clock, Edith had resumed her annoying manner; but I noticed she seemed in a great hurry to get off to church, which was surprising, as at a little past seven Mr. Grainger walked in again. He seemed vexed, though not altogether surprised at her absence, and set himself to talk to Agnes.

As for me, I retired to the back parlour to smoke a cigar; and then Smith called, and we passed the evening together.

At about nine o'clock we heard the young ladies return from church, and through the slight folding-doors we could distinctly hear Edith enter the other room hurriedly, and say, 'Good night, Mr. Grainger: you must excuse me this evening; Nelly is not well.'

Soon after, Mr. Grainger left. Of

course I had told Smith about the Bushes, and more particularly about Edith. He quite agreed with me that the young ladies had some scheme to turn me out, and he suggested that this Grainger might be in the plot, and, indeed, the cause of it. Having settled this to our own satisfaction, and agreed that it would be better to stay on another month, just for the fun of the thing, we refilled our glasses, lighted fresh cigars, and began talking of other things, when we heard a step come lightly down stairs.

'That's Edith, I'm certain,' I said.

'All safe?' asked the young person, as she entered the next room.

'Yes,' answered Agnes; 'he left soon after he knew you would not appear again. Why wouldn't you come?'

'Because I felt I could not play my part well to-night. It was more prudent to keep out of the way. Oh, Agnes! isn't this sickening?'

We could hear a deep sigh, almost sob, follow.

'For God's sake, Edith, don't you get downhearted,' said Agnes, earnestly; 'what is the matter to-night?'

There was a silence of two or three minutes, then Edith said, 'I came down on purpose to tell you. I have bad news. You must tell papa to-morrow. Mrs. Denham has given me warning?'

'Given you warning!' Agnes' voice sank as she spoke. 'Oh, Edith, how can we get on?'

'I have another week still, and there's Mr. West's money; but we shan't be able to save. Do you know, Agnes, I could not have been civil to Grainger to-night.'

There was a pause; then Agnes said, 'Papa will be so vexed. And why does Mrs. Denham turn you off?'

'Terms too high; and yet, God knows, I gave work enough for the money.'

Another pause. Presently, Edith exclaimed, 'I say, Agnes, is Mr. West still in the back room?'

'No, I think not; but——' Agnes' voice suddenly sank to a whisper. We heard a step cross the room,

evidently on tiptoe, and there was the slightest little rustle by the folding-doors—the young person was evidently reconnoitring through the keyhole. Smith and I felt very uncomfortable, and I was again utterly disgusted. A few minutes after, we heard the two girls go up stairs together.

I think the young person knew how well conversation, carried on in an ordinary tone, could be heard through those folding-doors, for she was more disagreeable than ever during the next two or three days. Certainly, it might have been the effects of losing her situation. She appeared just for tea in the evening, and during that half hour was barely civil to me, and gloomy even with her sisters. I can't say I found my home in a private family very agreeable.

Still there was something so out of the common way about Edith and her conduct, and, indeed, about the whole family, that I kept to my resolution of staying on, and Smith encouraged me to do so. H—— Terrace was a more convenient distance from his abode than my former lodgings: he could easily lounge in of an evening, and spend an hour or two with me in the back parlour, smoking my cigars and drinking my brandy-and-water; and Smith always consulted his convenience, especially when it combined economy with it.

Now I don't mean for an instant to insinuate that Smith was mean or grasping. He was a clever fellow, with a turn for the literary, and you know such fellows are generally poor. There was no harm in his being poor either, or remaining poor, if he liked; but there was harm in his having such expensive habits.

He never smoked but the very best cigars, and those constantly; and he never drank but the choicest wines and brandy, and those not in small quantities. He would ride, and drive, and go to the opera, &c., on to the end of the chapter. Fortunately, he had a kind of attractive power over rich people. All his friends and acquaintances were rich; and as he observed to me one day, 'You see, Lewis, my boy, it's rather convenient.'

THE PARIS SEASON.

THE Paris season this year, despite certain unfavourable circumstances, has been brilliant, and has even prolonged itself beyond the customary limits. Strolling in the delightful Bois de Boulogne, and resting for a few minutes in the Avenue de l'Impératrice on a fine afternoon, you are astonished at the broad, incessant roll of splendid equipages, which at once give you a vivid idea of the wealth and fashion congregated at Paris. Never since France was France has Paris rejoiced in so much material grandeur. The presence of many strangers of immense wealth, who delight in magnificent expense has added to the indigenous prosperity. Paris is now entitled, and not without justice, New Paris. The extensions of the city beyond the barriers, the new bridges arched over the Seine, the new boulevards that have been thrown out, the fair avenues in the Champs d'Elysées, the woods beyond the Arc de la Triomphe, the magnificent additions to the Louvre, the splendid edifices that are arising upon scenes of demolition, present scenes as striking as those fabled to be wrought by the hand of an enchanter. The enchanter in this case is the Emperor, the wealthiest, the most powerful, the most sagacious of European sovereigns, and, to state his advantages in a way most appreciable to many minds, the master of some thirteen hundred thousand a year pocket money and about fifteen palaces. This era of splendid building has been forebodingly likened to the days of Louis XIV., but with this important difference, that the object is not the selfish vanity of a Versailles but great public objects which may be said to yield at once a remunerative return. The French Cæsar, happier than the Latin Cæsar, has not waited till his death to present the people with harbours and gardens and palaces of delight. He well-nigh accomplished the Augustan boast of converting a city of brick into a city of marble. The

flush of prosperity has pervaded all Paris alike, from the palace of the Tuileries to the atelier of the ouvrier. Amid all the imperial influence is supreme. The Emperor is the State. The Emperor is public opinion. The Emperor is, or makes the season. Nobody even wishes to argue with the master of three hundred legions.

The first impression that strikes the visitor, not altogether agreeably, is the extreme expensiveness of Paris. The desire of the Parisians to make money runs a risk of defeating itself. In some quarters there has been a disposition to abridge the season. Families of great note in the country think they have gone through the Paris season if they come up in the middle of January and leave about Easter. If they linger five or six weeks later, till Ascension Day, it is a great point. It requires some economy in the country to make up for the inevitable extravagance of the capital. Officers in the French army feel this keenly. To be on duty at Paris implies, indeed, the minimum of work and the maximum of play. But the expenses are far beyond even the extra pay: those who have for years been sighing in garrison towns for the dear delights of Paris find that they require a profusion of napoleons; and married officers have frequently to dissipate their hard-earned savings. Against this are to be set extremely wealthy people who, by a series of brilliant entertainments, are keeping up the season till an advanced point this year. The Emperor will not leave Paris till the 1st or 2nd of June, and it will at least last as long as that. When the hot weather decidedly sets in the Parisian exodus commences. Many of the lions and lionesses will be in time for the best part of the London season. Paris activity will not be sensibly diminished. When the Parisians come over to London the London tourists will be beginning to pour into Paris.

Access to the Tuileries is much easier than to Buckingham Palace. About four thousand persons attend the State balls. Tickets to these are easily procurable, and in a great variety of ways. The invitations extend quite to the middle class, and even to many persons who, to speak plainly, would be thought vulgar rather than otherwise. Things are, of course, different in the case of the Empress's private balls, where the invitations are personal, and extend to a limited number. We have, of course, all heard of the fancy ball in which the costume of the Countess Castiglione made so great a sensation. Many of the old Legitimist families, who are loyal to the Count de Chambord, titular Henry V., have steadily held aloof from imperial festivities. They associate among themselves in their ancient palaces in the Faubourg St. Germain. Still, as the hopelessness of opposition to the present *régime* grows more and more apparent, these families become less indisposed to assume their proper place in Parisian society. Men who in the rapid business evolutions of late years have acquired sudden and great fortunes especially attach themselves to the present dynasty and court to acquire a position which they might not otherwise attain. The Americans form an important item in the upper, or rather the moneyed classes: the war has not prevented their travelling in great numbers and with great profusion of expense. The Emperor roams very freely about Paris, apparently without the slightest sense of insecurity. A friend of mine tells me that he generally reckons upon meeting him twice a day. He was driving in his calèche with a servant behind him a few days ago—this was down that faded Bond Street of Paris the Rue St. Honoré—and only a solitary workman recognized him. When in state with his guards, in returning through a great crowd from a review of his Turcos and Spahis in the Bois de Boulogne, the cries of 'Vive l'Empereur!' struck me as being both languid and infrequent. It is in the Champs d'Élysées and

the Bois de Boulogne that he is most frequently to be met. In the latter he will frequently descend from his carriage, and, leaning on the arm of a friend—he is generally accompanied with one—will take a walk in the Bois. The Empress also frequently drives this way, attended only by a few outriders. This absence of state contrasts amusingly with the military pomp with which the Prince Imperial is surrounded. Whenever he moves about, accompanied by his tutor, he is attended by an imperial guard. This probably helps to impress the dynastic idea upon the minds of the Parisians. The other night I was at the Théâtre Français, and was sitting opposite the imperial box, in which were the Emperor and the Empress, attended by some members of their suite. The play was the 'Louis XI.' of Casimir Delavigne. M. Alexandre Dumas, in some dramatic criticism that has just appeared, has spoken of this writer's merits in rather an invidious spirit. It is, perhaps, rather a departure from the strict classicality of the Théâtre Français to perform his productions, but their admission sufficiently proves his title to rank as a dramatic classic. The character of Louis XI. is familiar to English readers through the 'Quentin Durward' of Sir Walter Scott, and is perhaps not without some shadowy resemblance to that of the present Emperor. The Emperor paid the performers the compliment of listening attentively, but by an occasionally *distracted* manner and passing his hand over his forehead he exhibited all the signs of well-bred fatigue. He wore his usual grave, inscrutable face, and that easy, self-possessed manner which has always distinguished him, more especially of recent years. In the *entr'acte* he made abundant use of his lorgnette in surveying different parts of the house. The Emperor conversed very slightly with those in attendance, but the Empress did so freely, and appeared to derive great enjoyment.

Paris is certainly the dramatic capital of Europe. The dramatic gains of Paris are equal to the

literary gains of London. The theatres are nearly equal in number to the churches, and the churches strive to achieve a popularity by becoming theatrical. Thus Madlle. Sax is publicly advertised to sing at the Church of St. Roch, which has gained a distinctive name for its music. One day in May there was some very fine music there on an occasion when Dr. Manning was advertised to preach. There were solos by amateurs, the parts being sustained by some American ladies and their brother. Dr. Manning's sermon lasted upwards of an hour, and was marked by much eloquence and remarkable purity of intonation. He wished to raise funds for the purpose of promoting the spiritual interests of the French in London, and calculated their numbers at thirty thousand. He stated that he had just arrived from Rome, and brought from the Holy Father his benediction on the undertaking. Italian peculiarities of manner and gesture indicated Dr. Manning's prolonged residence in Italy; he is a man eminently calculated to win others to his own path of perversion. Since he went over to Rome there has been no chance of the republication of those sermons which are justly favourites in Anglican theology; and as he is said to be buying up the copies, those that remain are considered prizes by the book-collectors. It is not without deep regret that those who know him contrast the Manning of to-day with the Manning of the Oxford movement. Throughout the month of May the religious services at the Madeleine have excited great attention. Every evening at eight o'clock there have been service and sermons, the sermons being characterized by some of the best eloquence of the Roman Catholic pulpit. The vespers and benedictions on Whit-Sunday afternoon especially attracted crowds. Let us, however, return to the broader and more legitimate music-world. We hear of Madlle. Sax in a party given by Count Walewsky, with a concert afterwards. She sang in the duet 'Sicilienne' in the 'Vêpres,' being accompanied in her performance by

no less a personage than the illustrious Verdi himself. Rossini also has been observed feebly walking about the streets of Paris. The Italian opera-house closed early, not having had a very prosperous season, and being marked by some conspicuous failures. Italian opera is an exotic which does not take very kindly to French soil. The Paris opera is signally inferior to that of London, that of St. Petersburg, and that of Vienna. It is probably equal to any in Italy, even that of La Scala, at Milan, for the best Italian singers expatriate themselves for their best years that they may buy or build luxurious villas for their retirement. One reason is that the French are justly proud and greatly attached to their own great opera. During the performance at the Italian, however, Adelina Patti excited an enthusiasm which was a sort of adoration. The new home of the Académie Impériale de Musique, the new grand French opera-house, is verging towards its majestic completion. The French government will not have expended less upon it than a million sterling. To the credit of the French legislature this enormous sum for mere purposes of amusement was not voted without very great hesitation. The old opera-house, it will be remembered, in the Rue de Richelieu was demolished in 1820 by the order of the government after the assassination of the Duc de Berri. Here the best French operas have been brought out, and all the grand operas have been given with scenic effects that were long quite unrivalled in Europe. The Opéra Comique is complained of, that it is becoming too good; instead of being exclusively confined to music of a light, agreeable character, there is a tendency to be scientific, which is not over-popular. The French like to be accurate and classical in the proper place, but not at the Opéra Comique. The Théâtre Lyrique, built by M. Alexandre Dumas, may be considered to have attained an established position. The opera of 'Faust,' by Jules Barbier and Michael Carré, to the music of Gounod, has had a most successful run. The part of

Marguerite is sustained by that splendid songstress Mad. Miolan-Carvalho, so favourably known at Covent Garden Theatre. I greatly regret, for my own part, that Goethe's great work should be adapted to stage purposes. The interest centres on the salvation of an immortal spirit—not a proper subject for the frivolities of the stage. A French audience, however, by no means regards this as the primary object of 'Faust.' It gives its main attention to the seduction, bloodshed, and gorgeous scenery. There is a very characteristic difference between English and French drama. In England a drama generally ends happily: in France it ends unhappily. The Frenchman regards it as an essential point that the agony should be 'piled up.' He considers himself defrauded unless the stage flows with metaphorical rivers of blood. The disregard for the sanctities of human life herein typified is accompanied with full joyousness and *insouciance*. A very pretty song, given by 'un groupe de Bourgeois,' was rapturously received by the audience as exactly suiting their tastes; indeed it was the only air encored except a solo by Mad. Miolan-Carvalho. I give the words, which contrast oddly with the rest of this terrible drama. The air is perhaps the most popular in Paris just now:—

' Aux jours de dimanche et de fête
J'aime à parler guerre et combats;
Tandis que les peuples là-bas
Se cassent la tête,
Je vais m'asseoir sur les côtes
Qui sont voisins de la rivière
Et je vais passer les bateaux
En vidant mon verre.'

Perhaps, however, these lines more accurately describe a past state of feeling than the present. It appears to me that the national character is undergoing a change. Formerly the Parisian was content to saunter away a happy life in the fresh air of the open streets; he was content with a cigar and novel or newspaper, and even *eau sucrée* would satisfy his modest wants; aimless pleasure was the sole idea of existence. Life could offer few things

better than a good dinner, coffee and cognac at a *café*, and then a merry evening at the theatre. Occasionally the Parisian was very happy to vary the monotony of his amusements by 'assisting' at a revolution. This is all changed now. Everywhere a feverish activity abounds. Even the omnibuses race along the streets, causing at times fatal accidents, and the *voiture* driver lashes his hacks with unwonted energy. Bishop Butler thought that nations might run mad as well as individuals. The French nation has become insane, and their recognized delusion is money-mania. French enterprise is pushing itself into every region of speculation. The evil genius of gambling is abroad. In walking along the boulevards I have seen men, who once would have been serenely sipping their coffee, and watching the incidents of the moving crowd, examining the papers of their bulky pocket-books with self-satisfaction or feverish anxiety. Schemes which are taken to London, and there fail to find substantial support, are no longer looked upon as condemned. They are submitted to Paris financiers, prepared to run great risks, and may probably be adopted.

This state of things may be vividly seen at La Bourse. Having done justice to the splendours of Paris, I may be permitted to mention three institutions which I visited successively the other morning, and which, I think, contrast very unfavourably with our own. The first of these was the Stock Exchange. Never before had I seen so many unfavourable physiognomies! Never before had I heard from business men such a discordant Babel of sounds. Each man seemed wanting in capacity alone to run the career of a *Mirès*. The Stock Exchange adores *Mirès*. They grieved for him as if he was a martyr, and they welcomed him back as if he was a hero. His ultimate acquittal by the High Court of Appeal has lent a legal sanction to commercial profligacy. The Emperor declined the statue which the Stock Exchange offered him: the wonder is that it has not been

erected to the great Mirès. The sweets of large gains underived from honest labour possess for the mass an indescribable allurements. The 'rabble' of the Stock Exchange is notorious. It is hard for Englishmen to realize that in government loans the furthest rentes were fixed so low as ten francs. When the municipality introduced certain payments which told against the coulissiers, so great was the outcry that they were necessarily withdrawn. Every one in Paris has the ambition to be a rentier, and to make a fortune by his rentes. I thought of another great Exchange whose reverend legend is this, 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein.' I contrast the stable commercial enterprise of London with the fungous growth and preternatural excitement of the last ten years in France. In speaking of the Exchange, I may notice the extreme profusion of gold coin in Paris. The stream of exchange is that we take French silver, and send it to India, and they take in exchange our gold. La Bourse is a subject that strictly belongs to the season. The ladies who congregate in Paris while it lasts are not at all indisposed for active operations on the Bourse. Formerly they were admitted within the building, but now they are excluded, unless they have an express permission. They still loiter outside the railing, and beneath the shadow of the surrounding trees. It was not without relief that I quitted the Bourse, so splendid in its architectural effect, so disheartening in its moral aspects. I then walked down the Rue Colbert. I was proceeding to a very different place, the Bibliothèque Impériale. What a grateful change it was to find oneself in the Place Richelieu, beneath the shades of trees, and listening to the music of the spouting dolphins of the splendid fountain! No formalities are necessary in order to attend the reading-room, and I thought it would be as well to do a little quiet reading, as of yore in the reading-room of the British Museum. This side of the Bibliothèque has an

English dinginess, just as the front of our own Museum has a French glitter. The reading-room itself was an extreme disappointment. Very few books are accessible to the visitor. The standard English work I asked for was unprocurable. There is no convenient system of catalogues, or rather no catalogue at all. The students were comparatively few in number, and of not very prepossessing appearance. It is very rich in MSS. that would afford abundant material for historical works, and ancient ecclesiastical works; at times such men as Canon Wordsworth and Dr. Pusey may be found investigating its treasures. The library, however, is in a transition state, and scholars will be grateful for any improvements. The alternations of name through which the library has passed speaks of the changes in the State: Bibliothèque du Roi, Bibliothèque Nationale, Bibliothèque Impériale. It is a matter of regret that no good collection of English books exists in Paris. Galignani's does not rise above the level of the mere circulating library, probably for lack of encouragement; his reading-room is one of the most comfortable and complete of its kind.

From thence I went to the General Post Office in the Rue Jean-Jacques-Rousseau. I suppose most English travellers have been bewildered by the labyrinth of streets by which it is entangled. The place, tolerably central for business, is inconveniently distant from the English quarter. The arrangements of the Poste Restante are much more convenient than those of London, but the building is dirty and miserable indeed, when compared with St. Martin's-le-Grand. I think I must be giving expression to a tolerably unanimous sentiment when I say that the Paris Post Office is entirely unworthy of Paris.

It is all in vain to look for any news in the newspapers here, except of the scantiest description. The journals that once contained brilliant political articles, overflowing with eloquence and satire, are mute: the sterility of information is almost

as bad as that of opinion. At nine in the morning, and four in the afternoon, the newpillars in the Boulevards are ready to distribute the morning and evening papers, wet from the press. These must now be waited for with only a languid appetite, and be read only with indifferent interest. 'Galignani' in his summary of the previous day's papers sometimes simply states that they have nothing in them. On Whit-Monday the morning papers did not appear at all, because the printers had kept the preceding day as a regular fête. I don't think it made much difference, so that the loss would not be materially felt if there was only the afternoon publication. Imagine the 'Times,' 'Daily News,' 'Post,' 'Herald,' 'Telegraph,' not appearing some fine morning because their workmen had taken a holiday! You have a fair amount of war news from America and Poland, but the home news are scanty enough. We have generally a paragraph respecting the Imperial family; such as that the Empress went to the dog-show in the Bois de Boulogne, and was especially pleased with the dogs of the King Charles' breed. This exhibition, by the way, was successful enough; the hounds with which the Duke of Beaufort had been hunting the wolf being a great object of attraction. Other sources, however, may correct the newspaper deficiencies. There is a Russian lady visiting there just now, wealthy and literary, who is going to publish a work on her travels. The *on dit* is that her husband presented her with twelve thousand pounds for the purpose of studying Paris, and with a further sum of twelve thousand pounds for the purpose of studying London. We shall all be glad to obtain the benefit of this costly experience. A grave and masterly review of the most important aspects of Paris is to be found in the 'Impressions of a Flâneur,' the first title being 'Ten Years of Imperialism in France.' This work is said to have been written under the direction and quasi editorship of the Earl of Clarendon. In Paris there are always strong

conversational curientes in the various coteries, artistic, literary, philosophical, &c., into which society is much more broken up than in London. Moreover, Paris society is broken up through all successive grades into government circles, the ministerial patronage being so vast and ramifying so greatly. The play of conversation would not, I think, in such circles be very free or original. The large parties given by the Préfet de la Seine at the Hôtel de Ville, though formal, were well attended while they lasted, the invitations being given to everyone who has taken the trouble to duly inscribe his name on M. Haussman's list. These parties are all the better for the presence of Mlle. Haussman, who just now is decidedly one of the reigning belles of Paris. The most brilliant and successful party given of late is decidedly that by the Prince and Princess de Sagon at Chantilly. The weekly parties at the British Embassy ought duly to be mentioned. On the occasion of Her Majesty's birthday the hotel of the Embassy was, of course, brilliantly illuminated. We hear of different arrivals in Paris. One day Lord Brougham passes through, and is congratulated by his brethren of the Institute on his good looks. Another day Paris is invaded by an army of two thousand English workmen, a trip that has been devised for them with equal kindness and good sense. Of the different races run this season, Versailles, Vincennes, Paris, and Chantilly, I am not able to speak with authority. Being run on Sunday they received very scanty attention from the English in Paris. The great mass of the people seemed utterly indifferent. Those who went to Chantilly went quickly by rail; I am informed there was no display of carriages and horseflesh. Imitativeness of the English does not go very deep. The Parisian, sitting in his café, has more pleasure in looking at the illustrations, in the Paris pictorial papers, of our Epsom than in attending the French Derby. It may be very different in respect to the great Paris day. Just now the Spahis in Paris excite the largest

share of popular attention, whom the Emperor has enrolled in his service from the three departments of Algiers. Crowds gather to look at them when they appear in the Champs Elysées, looking most picturesque in their attire; hooded, and bonneted, and mounted on their own high-mettled steeds. The dark and turbaned warriors are constantly to be seen about the Tuileries, where a detachment is on duty. They are selected from the very best of their class, and must be gratified with the admiration which they everywhere receive. The review of them in the Bois which I have mentioned was a brilliant one, but was attended with several accidents in the course of the afternoon. The Empress and Prince Imperial were present, not together, which would be most accordant with our English notions, but with separate cavalcades. The Empress has just procured a new imperial toy. A gondola has been obtained from Italy, and placed on the waters of Fontainebleau. It is said to be the identical gondola which Lord Byron used when at Venice, and in which he used daily to go over to the Armenian convent. The gondolier is, of course, an Italian, and with the advantage or disadvantage of speaking very little French. The Empress and her ladies tried the effect of 'music o'er the waters,' the music being, of course, Italian. The decorations of the gondola are very splendid; the Empress will find its use grateful in the hot summer days. The gondola, however, of which I would speak gratefully, from my reminiscences of Venice, is only an extension of the punt. Oxford men who, this summer term, are lounging on pillows in their punts, beneath the shadow of the elms of the Cherwell, may obtain a very accurate notion of the luxury of a gondola. The Exhibition of the Works of Living Artists in the Palais de l'Industrie is at present one of the most striking features of Paris. The Exhibition has just been closed for a period of five days, for the sake of altering some of the arrangements, which has postponed the careful examina-

tion which I trust to devote to it. It is the Royal Academy of France, only its exhibition is open but once in two years. The number of pictures hung this year is 2217. From an analysis of the nationalities of different painters, it appears that four, and four only, are British. The direction of the whole has been under the Ministre d'Etat, Count Walewsky, and Nieumerkerke, Director-General of Museums, assisted by a committee. Various of the best pictures are those which have been painted by commission from the Emperor and Empress. Among the battle pictures, Yoon's picture of the Battle of Magenta generally concentrates a crowd around it. The works of Bandon, Jerome, and Desgoffes are much noted. The collection of portraits is good, comprising portraits of the Emperor, the Empress, the Pope, the Kings of Italy, &c. There is a separate exhibition of photographs, to see which an additional payment is required. The garden scene for sculpture is very prettily laid out. In reference to works of art the Emperor is still engaged in organising at the Louvre the museum which will bear his name. The Emperor has done great things for art at the Louvre. He has added thirty masterpieces to the gallery, among which is the 'Conception' by Murillo, for which was paid to the representatives of Marshal Soult the enormous sum of 615,300 francs.

The Corps Législatif was dissolved on the 7th of May. One of its last acts was to vote a large sum for the relief of the districts distressed through the American war. There does not appear to be so much spontaneous liberality in France as elsewhere. There was also a verbose discussion on the right of foreigners to petition the legislature; the effect of which was, to leave things *in statu quo*. The quantity of legislation, as the 'Bulletin des Lois' will testify, was great. Nevertheless, there has scarcely been the remotest approximation to a parliamentary debate, and no Englishman appears to consider it worth his while to attend the sittings. Since that time, the keenest interest of the season has

been centred in politics in the new elections. The interference of the Government in the elections has been carried to an unwarrantable extent. They pay the expenses of their own candidates and throw every vexation in the way of their opponents. An Englishman has abundant reasons to be vexed with the Minister of the Interior. My literary arrangements are discomposed. Mr. Kinglake's book has been seized. The 'Saturday Review' has been seized. My copy of the 'Guardian' has been seized. Hundreds and thousands of people have been trembling with rage against M. de Persigny, who, according to the 'Constitutionnel,' 'personifies devotedness to the Imperial dynasty.' No one very much cared for his warning against 'La France.' The Count de Guéronnière is not a man who inspires any particular sympathy; he is not a man who has succeeded in impressing on the public the notion that he possesses any independency of character. But Persigny's persistent opposition to M. Thiers, the paper war which he has declared against him, and which the historian can have no fair opportunity of answering, have greatly the better part of Paris against the Minister. To M. Thiers himself I entertain a great literary animosity. In his history he has entirely abdicated all attempts to be truthful and impartial, and the dangerous nonsense he has talked 'sur les frontières naturelles' have materially added to the chances of European war. But, nevertheless, all literary men feel very much what they felt when an unworthy combination ousted Macaulay from the representation of Edinburgh. Persigny is said to be a very choleric man, and to say and do a great many things under the influence of very bad temper. The *on-dit* is, that in reference to M. Thiers, the Emperor is very far from sharing the wishes of his Minister, and has great admiration and regard for the historian. Although he is a little surprised, perhaps a little discomposed by the number of Orleanist candidates who have appeared, it is believed that the Emperor inclines in the direction of Constitutionalism.

A regular opposition would go far to achieve this. It is believed that thirty or forty members will be returned in defiance of the Government; and if among these are to be found Thiers, Rémusat, Odillon Barrot, Dufaure, Berryer, Montalembert, the palm of eloquence in the Chamber will rest decidedly with the Opposition. M. Dufaure will be the most splendid speaker, being thought to excel even M. Berryer in forensic eloquence. I regret to notice that he met with an accident on the railway a day or two ago, but, I trust, nothing serious. Surely, these gentlemen having taken the required oath, may be admitted into the Assembly they would adorn without suspicion. Long tenure has united the *de facto* and the *de jure* of Imperialism. The Opposition may try and carry out to the utmost their simple and noble programme of peace, liberty, and economy; they may seek to bring within reasonable limits the overgrown power of the Emperor; but they have assuredly no desire to renew the era of revolutions. The Emperor must be convinced that he cannot transmit unimpaired to his heir the enormous aggrandisement with which special circumstances have surrounded himself. The establishment of a constitutional throne would be the safest guarantee for its stability. A man of the Emperor's political sagacity must himself be deeply convinced of this.

Sunday, the 31st of May, was a wonderful day for Paris—a day that will be remembered for years. There were some droppings of rain which at times became regular showers; but these would clear up, and the weather became really fine. In the morning I had attended Divine service in the English church in the Avenue Marbœuf, where Bishop Spencer used to officiate after he had resigned his Indian see. There is an evening service there for English working men, of whom there is a large number in Paris. A large proportion of these are dependent on the Paris season, being engaged as grooms and drivers: the English are always preferred in Paris stables. In the evening I was at the Epis-

cepal church, 23 Rue de la Madeleine, which is a large hired room, but admirably arranged, and the music, in particular, is very good. The eloquent and accomplished clergyman who officiated here some time ago, tried the experiment of reading the liturgy and preaching in the French language. Many French gentlemen attended, and were affected to tears by the sublime simplicity of our ritual. It is believed that the Roman Catholic clergy did not at all approve of this, and that the matter was brought before the Minister and even the Emperor. The church was taken possession of by the police, and only owing to the strong representations of the Embassy, was permitted to be opened on Sunday. For a time the daily services were suspended, and none in the French language have been since allowed. While the sober portion of the English held fast to their honoured religious traditions, the most important business and the most important pleasures were being transacted; the great Paris races were being run, and the great Paris elections were taking place. It is, indeed, impossible to exaggerate the importance of these elections, which will settle the fate of France for the next six years. There was an utter absence of all the excitement customary in England at such scenes; no meetings, no speeches, no banners and music. Everything passed over so quietly, that, except in the immediate neighbourhood, no one was aware that the process of voting was going on. It was very different with the noisier and more exciting, but less important event of the day—the race for the great Paris prize. For hours there was such a continuous roll of carriages in the Champs Elysées, that the wonder was, whence could be provided such a multitude of chariots and horsemen. The prize was worth upwards of 100,000 francs, to which a magnificent Cup was added by the Emperor. The Emperor—to whom is due the whole merit of the race, whatever that may happen to be—the Empress, and the Prince Imperial, were there; perhaps, also, the

King of Portugal and the Prince of Orange, who are just now making an *incognito* visit to Paris. I am told that the Emperor was received with the greatest demonstrations of applause. The Prince Imperial had a guard of the Spahis. Nearly all the horses that ran were English, including the late favourite for the Derby, and the French studs generally owe all their organization to the English. The Parisians had hardly dared to hope that a French horse would take a conspicuous position. Great is the exultation that La Touques has obtained the second place. Mr. Savile, the owner of The Ranger, has given 10,000 francs to the poor of Paris. On Monday morning the interest of the races was over, and the interest of the elections was at the height. The candidature of M. Thiers excite the greatest interest, the second *circonscription* being the most important in France for its intellect, wealth, and influence. I went into two of the voting places, respectively, the Hôtel de Ville, and the peristyle of the Théâtre Français. Three or four officials were seated at a long table, one of whom very readily gave me information. There was not the slightest attempt at restraint, and the proceedings appeared to be conducted with the greatest fairness and impartiality. Each elector brought a paper for his identification, giving a full description of himself, his age, name, and signature. A great number of votes were rejected through informality, to the manifest chagrin of patriotic citizens. The *ouvrier* class appeared to prefer voting on the Monday, and to be not without suspicion that their votes might be tampered with in the interval between the two days. At four the proceedings were over. A few hours afterwards, in a cloudless sky, there happened a remarkable eclipse of the moon, that could be completely observed in Paris. In the days of Alcibiades this would have been a portent decisive of the fate of an empire. Here and there, in a few superstitious minds, there might even now be some mystery and awe.

It is the morning after the elections. The official declaration will not be made till ten on Thursday morning; but we know all about the scrutiny in Paris. First and foremost, M. A. Thiers is returned. Even greater than this, throughout Paris Opposition candidates are returned. Great is the rejoicing among the Liberals. Oh, if the '*Revue des Deux Mondes*' had only come out a day later! As the day wears on, and the electric telegraph flashes its news from the provinces, the victorious feeling of the Opposition becomes much modified. Thiers has very nearly been returned for Lisle also, and at Marseilles, Berryer and Marie are also safe. Everywhere else the Opposition is defeated. Dufaure is nowhere. Montalembert is nowhere, nor Barrot, nor Rémusat. Shame on the craven constituencies, driven like cattle by priests and officials, to

vote as Government orders! What a pity that the elections for Paris did not precede by some days the elections for the provinces! It would have made a difference throughout the world.

And now comes a great break in the Paris season. The elections are over. The races are over. To-day the Emperor and the court depart for Fontainebleau. The great houses in the Faubourg St.-Germain will soon be tenantless and silent. The influx of English noblemen and gentry, whom The Ranger and Lord Clifden have brought here, are returning to London or seeking distant shores and mountains. At Paris, indeed, there is a season all the year round; there is always influx and reflux of visitors. The regular Paris season, however, is momentarily dying out. Here, then, I pause.

FLOWERS ON DINNER-TABLES.

IN most cases it takes some time for fashions to root themselves thoroughly, but sometimes some new thing establishes itself nearly suddenly, and we perceive at once that the fashions henceforth will be *is it and not of it*. Every one wears hats and bonnets—the question is as to shape. Most people use flowers now to ornament their dinner-table—the question is how they put them there.

This is no real innovation. Children for their doll feasts instinctively gather flowers: we hardly can read in history of banquets that had not flowers; these shreds of Nature's brightness seem made to haunt festive meetings. They always have been present on the most luxurious tables in the most artistic homes: now that we all are growing more luxurious and more artistic, it is only 'a sign of the times' that they strengthen their hold amongst us.

With the established custom we begin to discern the grievances, and taking the *thing* for granted, I want now to discuss the *way* of it.

It has long been a great grievance that flowers and bushy plants so very much obscure the view across our tables. It is not at all times agreeable to play at bopeep during dinner-time; and to dodge an *épergne* of flowers, or to lean round a well-grown fern, or to evade a handsome gloxinia, which stops the way to a wine-cooler, is altogether so awkward, that even the consumers have begun to have a word to say regarding the wares they purchase.

The 'independent spirit' and the 'rebellion against authority' are really, it is to be feared, ascending almost to our drawing-rooms. The very masters and mistresses are venturing to have opinions.

Again, on other grave reasons, I have heard, on good authority, of very great innovations—handsome but heavy plate reconsigned to its wonted repose, and 'a bit of glass trumpery' being actually used instead. 'My lady says it looks brighter.' 'My lord don't know what plate's cleaned with; he dares

to say it's some poison;' in which nine times out of ten it is whispered my lord is correct. Then people do like change; and the fashion is gaining ground of making much more account of doing things very well than finely and thus expensively. There is not an instant's doubt as to the cleanliness of bright glass, and the extremest cleanliness has long been most *distingué*.

It often is a great puzzle why perfection in little things is so hard to attain and so costly; girls who know by experience the marvellous cost of gloves, and cuffs, and collars, and such small fry of attire, know that it is quite possible to spend a good deal on them. The difference in the expenditure of a well or ill-dressed woman is not in the material, since the former wear continually fabrics despised by the latter; it simply is the freshness, the good make, the perfect harmony that reigns over all she does wear, and which, moreover, is not carried out without much surveillance, many small innovations, innumerable minute items which redeem any dress from cheapness—that worst of charges.

The taste and the care required are here for very much; and no one who understands such things would be the least surprised at the great prices fine ladies have given contentedly for their bonnets, trimmed, perhaps, with one simple ribbon, but matchless in cost and elegance. It is becoming fashionable to make people pay for good taste; and I fancy, in engaging servants, the list of accomplishments now required by a mistress differs a good deal from the list of some ten years back. Indeed, as regards alone the arrangements of dinner-tables, we almost require the aid of schools of harmony and design, and an organized system of competitive examination. The fact is, that new fashions have brought in new labours with them. It is very hard to reconcile the opposing claims of beauty and utility, and of convenience and high fashion. Perhaps it might be

argued that beauty is inseparable from what is really useful, and I am quite sure ten thousand would say that 'out of fashion is hideous;' thus, it must follow naturally, that the two have to make a compromise, and while beauty kindly promises to be as little as possible inconvenient, fashion, on its side, meets it, and proposes to 'make things pleasant.'

The result, apparently, is, that flowers intrench themselves firmly upon our English dinner-tables, but sensibly stoop an inch or two and don't put themselves in the way, seeing plainly that if they do, a general rise will suppress them.

There are, then, a few essential points now-a-days, which insist upon having a hearing.

The pretty, tall *épergnes*, and the vases with waving plumes, one or two feet above the table, are found to make a barrier, which, if not really opaque and solid, is a great bar to conversation. A dangling spray of heath, or a lovely frond of *gleichenia*, may be very beautiful, and at the same time quite *de trop*, while the large and massive plants are discarded for very heaviness.

At Paris there has been introduced the mode of low trays or *plateaux*. In the centre, a great oval dish is filled with flowers laid lightly, grouped into separate bouquets, and made into one great wreath. In the centre the flowers rise higher; sometimes a lamp is placed there, sometimes a very graceful statuette fills the place. These trays are of all materials—glass, china, and gilt wickerwork may equally be used; the latter being at present, perhaps, those most commonly seen.

The light bars of the wicker frame which have, of course, the appearance of gold, have a good effect in contrast with the white and red and green of the beautiful flowers massed in them.

Every one must remember the exquisite bit of colouring in one of Bacon's essays in speaking of masques and revels—pale sea-green, and knots of carnation, sometimes flaked, too, with white; there is something graceful and courtly at once about these colours; they combine the rarest tint of the sky as it

melts into night, with the exquisite radiant crimson which touches the far horizon beneath which the sun has sunk; for all those good old writers drew patterns from what they saw. I don't think they were inventive, but they reproduced God's works.

In fitting the great trays, then, let us try knots of carnation, barriers made of fern fronds and hedges of sweet white jasmine, barring and interlacing all the gay colours together.

In Paris I have heard of the tray being carried round at the close of the dinner, distributing the bouquets to each of the ladies: this was done this spring, sometimes, in houses which are famed even there for their perfect taste.

The bouquets on these occasions were of holly and camellias, a mixture which, it may be well believed, produced a beautiful effect. Holly and camellias were, indeed, the rage for everything; at present we must content ourselves with something more ethereal, for the very idea of carrying such very substantial flowers is almost too much, at present, for the heat of a London season. The lightest green and white, and the beautiful carnation, will absolutely too be found now the coolest and most refreshing colouring.

The centre of the great vase may have, as I said, a lamp, casting its light downwards full on the waxen flowers; otherwise, a statuette may be used, placed upon a low pedestal, and this should rise, as it were, out of a low bank of flowers.

A very usual arrangement is to line the baskets with gilt trays to hold water; but it may be found an improvement to line the lower part only, thus keeping up round the edge a light and open lattice. One of the prettiest patterns is, perhaps, that of oval hoops crossing, or else an interlaced scroll going all round the edge; the flowers and ferns drooping over, and here and there creeping through it, and the green being so arranged as to rise to the centre slightly.

A very handsome oval centre-piece was shown me lately at Messrs. Phillips'—a great majolica tray with a kind of latticed edge and little

winged Cupids here and there seeming to support it. The colour inside the dish was a bright turquoise blue.

The centre, raised on a pedestal, was a fruit dish, with three small figures, of such a shape as to be facing all sides. The tray, according to one mode, being filled with moss or with well-soaked white cotton wool, should have the green groundwork arranged on it so as just to cover as far as the edge of the fruit vase, which rests on a hidden pedestal. The fruit vase should be in height from the table about equal to the width of the tray on its narrow side. Fruit can be arranged here in a very bright glowing pyramid, that would seem well to finish and crown the tray of flowers; the flowers themselves being made to harmonize with its colouring, at least by force of contrast.

But I think the most tempting fashion for such a great dish would be to fill the vase with water and to place in it water-lilies. These would be so beautiful in their various colours—pink and blue and white cut and laid here to float.

Some people have suggested large blocks of ice for the centre of such a vase as this; and really they melt so slowly that they well might be used oftener. Few things would look more glittering than a block placed on a pierced stand—the melted water, of course, flowing down into the great lily-pond. I have not seen this done, but am assured that it answers well, as the extremely great cold of the Wenham Lake ice of course makes it melt slowly, even when exposed, as it thus is, to heated air.

A mass of gloxinias is beautiful in the extreme, filling a large tray of this kind, the leaves being put in with the flowers, which group about in a charming variety of all the most delicate tints and of all the richest colours.

For the ends, the plans are still various. Sometimes they are still allowed to be high vases, as they are less imposing and make a less entire division upon the table than the large centre-piece. The effect, however, of low centre and high

ends is certainly bad artistically, and one cannot contemplate its ever becoming popular. The fashion that gains ground daily, and that seems now almost fixed, is to have the low centre, but with something high rising from it, so slight and slender as not to impede any view; and while for the ends we use wide tazze, which are neither flat nor high, branches or lights of some kind give height to the table between. This is perhaps the most graceful of all the dinner fashions. The surface of the table is broken as is desirable; but there are no tall piles of flowers, and we look down, as we should do, upon the pretty blossoms which assuredly are meant rather for our view than for that of the servants only who are standing behind the chairs. As things have been lately managed, their eyes were certainly the chief gainers usually.

The tazze, then, at each end, require most careful 'dressing.' I have rather a dislike myself to the use of clay, as is now much the fashion for 'fixing things;' for though it really is impossible to dress the March vases without it, one can't help imagining that fruit that is to be eaten must suffer by the contact. The fruit, if placed in these tazze, may be piled up on leaves quite well; but if flowers are used here, also, the clay will be very useful. At South Kensington there are some difficulties, the groups for competition being forced, I believe, to include fruit; but on a dinner-table, perhaps, each tazza filled with flowers would be infinitely prettiest. Suppose that one had roses and another geraniums, or that one was laden with the exquisite flowers of orchids; the fruit could then be arranged in its own separate dishes, and when a raised dish is used for the centre of the great tray, it would be of course for fruit.

It is now more than ever attempted to keep to single flowers. Each dish or basket is filled with some separate kind, which gives a sort of repose—if such an expression may pass—to eyes that would be wearied by endless repetitions of the same mixed flowers. For it must be remem-

bered well that our most wearying sameness is often in variety. This has been well said as to life, and I am sure we may stretch the meaning till it comes to include our flowers. Pray picture a series of bouquets—some larger, some smaller; some brighter, some duller; some more costly, some more cheap; some very stiff and formal, others quite light and elegant. All are, however, composed of red, and white, and blue, and pink, and yellow, and lilac, with various medium tints, and a prevailing green leafage. They *must* be all alike, some pretty, indeed, and some ugly, but all alike to our brains. A pretty plant may rest one, and so may a single flower, but a series of *mixed anythings* must be inexpressibly wearisome. Thus it is that the really elegant and simple fashion gains ground so. A cluster of white roses lie lightly as just gathered, a mass of beautiful lilies are half hidden in another vase: here are purple violets in thick clusters amidst green leaves, here are the glowing cactuses flaming out in their scarlet dress. Sometimes, indeed, we may find some brilliant striking contrast that adds to the general harmony by knitting the tints altogether; and, indeed, we must guard against sameness in having each flower separate. This can be done far best by carrying out the idea at the same time that we drop the letter of our fixed rule; we may make then piles of mixed roses, in which several colours blend; or, again, with geraniums, we may make a most sparkling group. Thus we avoid real sameness, while still we have the elegance and all that natural beauty which we find in one flower singly.

Orchids, I think, are flowers that ought to be seen thus, only a single species lying alone amidst green leaves. These most lovely flowers depend so much on their perfect shape; and it is quite in the flower that the most exquisite painting is generally. Thus we should have them near us so as to look down into them; even on drawing-room tables they seem to me quite lost when put in a mixed vase.

This present arrangement of table

flowers seems to me a most pleasant one, because it leaves so much room for making little changes. One day a statuette; another day, perhaps, a lamp; another day a fruit stand; again, a little plant trained in a graceful shape, or else a few tall flowers arranged to form a centre. Each and all of these would, at different times, be pretty.

Another good point is in the licence we have for material. Almost anything would look well thus arranged; and I am quite sure we shall some day hear of all sorts of new inventions that are brought to the aid of this fashion.

With reference to such things, I must say a few words here as to shape, as shape is the only external that can much disturb the beauty of the flowers and leaves when well arranged. The tray for the centre, of course, must vary in size according to the table; it looks best, perhaps, as an oval, the sides being very low—never, indeed, exceeding four inches or so at the edge; and the height of the statuette not exceeding the length of the tray, measuring the former from the table on which the tray stands, so as to include the fictitious height that blocks may give to the pedestal.

If fruit is used, perhaps a lower centre is better; as in admitting a high statuette, one lays much stress on its slenderness.

For general use, perhaps, nothing is better than glass and china, or even that dark terra-cotta of the peculiar dewy redness that is seen often in South America. But for flowers only, we may use a great many more things: wood, and wire, and wicker-work, either varnished or gilt, might be used; and as most people now can do something of illuminating, no doubt that powdered gold which is painted on with turpentine is at hand in many places. It has really a good effect in making up such ornaments; and there is always so much amusement in making up an impromptu 'great dinner,' in places where such things seem impossible, that one is glad to suggest all possible ways and means.

The new work of china painting, too, seems the very thing for such

doings. I cannot see at all why, if there are any people who are frantic about new dessert services, while Paterfamilias gravely repeats, 'My dear, I can't do it'—I do not see, I say, why, if he won't they shouldn't, and exercise their own cleverness while they spare his much-menaced purse.

The stands should be rather low, not above nine inches in height: they may be somewhat in shape like soup-plates on inverted breakfast-cups. I say this as an idea of size and relative proportion; but of course the inverted cup may transform itself rightly into a pretty pedestal, and the superincumbent soup-plate may relinquish its rim with propriety.

One of the very best tazze that I ever saw as an *accident*, was a very low bowl of old china, which stood upon another of small size and fanciful shape. The deep, low old bowl was really perfect for flowers, and, indeed, this present fashion is likely to revive greatly that prettiest and most excusable of all extravagant tastes—the feminine love of old china.

As to the modelling and choice of statuettes, I have heard also of Italian workmen who seem to be very happy in their natural taste for such things; and near some of the English potteries, I know that people can get their own fancies carried out in a way that is very pleasant to those who are fond of designing.

Why should we not design tazze of the shape that we think most suitable, and, seeing it first in the clay, then have it brought out if worth it? For those who intend to paint china, the extra task of designing it will be, indeed, a great means of producing a high-class work. The shape and the design, and then the flowers to suit, are really all one idea, which should be evoked from one brain.

I have not said anything of the tall end groups that still linger, because when the centre has sunk down, it seems certain the rest will follow, and really one can't say much new of a thing that has been so exhausted.

The sets of high groups, indeed, have gained so firm a hold, that they

are sure to last for a long time, even if not for always; but in adopting the lower fashion, we may hope to secure the novelty that is most likely of all to spread widely, and which has, above all, the inducement of being 'out of a fella's way more.'

The flat round baskets which have lately become so popular resemble exactly *strawberry punnets* covered all over with gilding, till they look just like golden baskets. Mine are made by Messrs. Hammond, Baker Street, Portman Square.

These are just the sort of things that any lady might ornament, and any common basket-maker readily construct for her.

The sides require to be about three inches high. The strands should be rather large and *flat*, and ribbon-like, merely interlacing, like a sort of wide *plat* or band.

It is possible to use either wicker or wood for the bottom of the basket; or even mere rings of wicker-work may be used, to slip over, round tins of flowers.

These tins should be made with straight sides—a mere ring of tin of the required size and depth, with a second ring within it. The *inner* ring is about four inches in diameter, and is filled with a block of wood. The outer ring is filled with clay, or sand, or water; and while this contains the flowers and keeps them in place most beautifully, the inner block is crowned with a pretty and graceful statuette.

The coloured Dresden figures are also sometimes used here; but certainly the cool white is prettier than the colour.

When there is any difficulty in making the heights accord together blocks of wood can be used to heighten, or omitted to lower a figure.

For the figures themselves the chief point of all is slenderness; some that have one arm raised gain height and lightness by this. And now that even for ladies the art of modelling has become so general, why should not a little skill be expended on such-like fancy work? Shells would be good for practice, and animals and figures would soon follow where taste existed previously; and one

can hardly imagine any work more interesting and more pleasant. It is so completely making pretty forms from a shapeless mass; and then when they harden into a lasting form we really have *an idea* that did not exist before.

Another most taking pattern somewhat resembles in basket-work the prettily shaped glass baskets that were used for flowers last year.

Glass is of all things certainly least appropriate for a basket. But these new patterns of Mr. Luff's are real honest baskets, only made in the prettiest shape.

For a set of three, for a supper-table or a breakfast, the centre one is large, and has a high, light handle, round which of all plants growing the climbing fern looks loveliest. This most beautiful of all creepers for all purposes of decoration is to be seen in perfection at Mr. Veitch's, Chelsea. The best plan is to have a small *plant* of it, and to use it pot and all. The baskets have, too, an edging on which ferns and flowers lie lightly; and why, I cannot tell, but the flat style of edge is most taking.

The side baskets have no handles: they are merely trays of flowers. Much depends on arrangement, no doubt, in these as in all things. And to me it appears a great point to avoid having too much colour.

One should have *an idea*, I think, and then try to carry it out. Groups and bouquets lying buried in green fern fronds—knots of geraniums sparkling amidst their own scented leaves—or roses in all their beauty, simply fresh gathered there.

For many impromptu fêtes, picnic and strawberry feasts, are not these pretty baskets the very things to use? For such use we might varnish them brown. A stick of

black and another of red sealing-wax dissolved in spirits of wine makes the most excellent varnish, as is well known to all flower-lovers. The dark brown looks so well for every sort of flower-basket; and in this pretty pattern refinement and grace are found, even though it be clad, indeed, in dark and sober brown.

Still there are beautiful things, many and rare, to be seen. The white Dresden figures, for instance, which hold up a single dish. These, *if but filled lightly*, would be an ornament anywhere.

The failing in dressing them is most often in dreadful stiffness. Very few leaves are used: those few are full-grown vine-leaves. A heavy mass of fruit, or some gigantic full-blown roses, are placed there by way of fine specimens. The poor unfortunate figure looks crushed and weighed down beneath them.

Now if a light pendant wreath or two of delicate leafage be found, and left to hang over gracefully and freely at the edge;—if the flowers, while well pronounced, are yet not of the largest size, nothing can look more elegant and appropriate than these figures. The most slender and graceful I have seen of this sort are at Phillips's. But then, too, there are coloured groups, of which some people are very fond.

I never think, somehow, that the soft, delicate tints of the painted china can accord well with flowers. Their colours approach so very near the softness and clearness of nature that it is really hard to force them into so very close a comparison. When they are decked with flowers for once their tints look dull.

NOTE.—The 'glace sentine' described in last month's Number is now to be seen, arranged, at Messrs. Hammond's, Baker Street.





**BOUQUET-HOLDER PRESENTED TO H. R. H. THE PRINCESS OF WALES
BY THE MAHARAJAH DULEEP SINGH.**

(Drawn from a Photograph:—Makers, Messrs. London and Ryder.)

THE bouquet-holder is of carved rock crystal, with pearls and coral introduced; on the stem is a band of emeralds and diamonds and a jewelled coronet; the foot is formed of a ball of crystal with rubies and diamonds. By turning the ball the foot springs open into four supports, on each of which is a plume and cipher; attached to the holder is a chain of gold and pearls, and a hoop ring of eight pearls.

RE THE "DERBY."

THE DERBY DAY UNDER AN UMBRELLA.

IT was a green silk one, with a bamboo cane curving neatly round for the handle, in *one solid piece*, mind you; your separately-fabricated - and - subsequently - attached handles are a great mistake—always getting loose—or breaking off short on gusty days—or slipping about hopelessly in your hand. I am for the integrity of umbrella sticks. I hold with solid canes, and by them too, in windy weather. Moreover, my *parapluie** had hollow ribs, in accordance with the sound-

* I hope the reader will observe that I have been driven to the adoption of this French substantive out of sheer regard for the elegancies of composition, tautology being so much reprehended in British authorship. If I have to refer to the article again, I may call it a 'regenschirm,' and so on.

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est principles of iron construction—i. e. combining the greatest amount of strength with economy of material—and was, in consequence, a very light one. It cost twenty-five shillings, and was purchased a week before at Isaacson's celebrated warehouse in Regent Street. When I demurred at the price as extravagant (in these days one can buy a good useful combination of gingham and whalebone, answering all practical purposes, for half a crown), Mr. Isaacson smiled compassionately, and observed—

'Well, sir, I don't say but what it do seem a good deal to pay, but then consider the quality—look at the cane, sir—examine the silk—think of the workmanship in that frame, sir. Why, you'd hardly believe me now, but there isn't such

D

another umbrella as that in —. Stop; yes, I recollect there is *one*. *I sold the fellow of that umbrella to Lord Russell yesterday.*

Could any one resist taking it after *that*? I produced my money, returned Mr. Isaacson the patent leather case which he was good enough to include in the bargain, and seizing my prize with a strong and steady hand, walked triumphantly out of the shop.

'What on earth has all this to do with the Derby?' cries Mr. Carpley. Why, don't you observe, my dear Mr. C., that in adopting this preface to my remarks, I do but imitate the fashion of the day, which is to introduce articles, leaders, lectures, homilies, by a text or thesis as remote from the discourse as possible? Say you want to convince me of the authenticity of the Pentateuch, you begin with a joke from Joe Miller. Haven't you taken the Plymouth Breakwater as a stepping-stone to your essay on the authorship of Junius? Who could have supposed that Margaret Catchpole would have become a Peg for you to hang your notions of criminal reform upon? This *roundabout* plan of writing is common enough with all of us now. It is a poetical license which we use in the form of a little surprise for our readers—like the wonderful posturing which Mr. Acrobat goes through outside my window before he finally places his devoted head upon the carpet and elevates his mocassins in mid air. So let me take shelter under my umbrella, and tell you how I spent the 20th of May beneath that verdant canopy.

Mr. Joliffe's barouche and pair started from his house in Wimpole Street at 10 o'clock A.M. for the Derby. Would you like to know who Mr. Joliffe is? Ask your friend A. or B. at the Club, and they will probably tell you about him. Every other man in town knows Joliffe, and the alternate individuals are much to be pitied. If I were suddenly called upon to describe Mr. Joliffe's profession, I should say he was a philanthropist in a large way, and found unlimited credit with most houses. I believe

his business takes him for a few hours every week into the City, where probably he presides at meetings held for the promotion of universal good fellowship, or acts as secretary to some society for the encouragement of generosity among the middle classes. There never was such a fellow for getting up entertainments—for helping everybody to everything that anybody wants. Would you like to hear Patti or Titians? Joliffe's stall is at your service. Does your aunt covet that gorgeous Indian shawl at Hooker & Chutney's? Joliffe can get it for you at trade price. Do you wish to be introduced to the Cosmographical Club? Joliffe has the entrée there as everywhere. Finally, have you a mind to mix in the pomps and vanities of this honest world? to join picnics, pleasure parties, excursions to Richmond, fêtes champêtres at midsummer, or charades at Christmas? Joliffe is the man to manage everything. I verily believe that if I desired to sit beside Mr. Coxwell in his next scientific balloon ascent, I need only apply to J. J., to obtain that intrepid aéronaut's permission, so universal is his interest in the London world—so boundless his desire to oblige everybody. An arch-conspirator in the cause of pleasure, he is always hatching some tremendous plot for the amusement or gratification of his friends—planning crafty and deep-laid schemes which take them by surprise, and lay them under lasting obligations. In a word, Mr. Joliffe is one of those pleasing specimens of mortal clay, which time has consolidated into a thorough brick.

When, therefore, I revert to the carriage which is standing at the door of this hospitable bachelor's house (for bachelor he still is—let the ladies explain it if they can), I need scarcely say that his turn-out was of the smartest, his postilion of the gamest, his hamper of the fullest upon the road that day. Ah! what a day! Fasts and feasts, wakes and weddings, all must take their chance of weather in this climate. But the Derby morning—the great metropolitan gala to be ushered in by

snow* and wind and rain—this was indeed a disappointment.

Of course we made the best of it—we had cloaks and great coats and wrappers and Inverness capes and railway rugs and horse cloths, and were further provided with 'petits canons' of cognac which Mr. Joliffe insisted on our taking before we mounted. We had access, moreover, to a box of as good cigars as I have ever had the honour to smoke, and were, I think, as comfortable as we could be under the circumstances when we started.

A good proportion of 'the road' from Wimpole Street to Epsom lies through our own beloved metropolis; but where the town ends and the country begins, or how much remains in a kind of *rus in urbe* condition, who shall say? Every street sends out half a mile of bricks and mortar annually. An old gentleman informed me the other day that he remembered when habitable London was bounded on the north by Oxford Street, on the south by Piccadilly, on the east by Regent Street, and on the west by Park Lane. What is meant by the 'West End' to-day? For my part I believe that 'favoured locality' will stretch on until it occupies the whole of Middlesex. It is the same in every direction. When Pope was south of Charing Cross, he might have cried—

'Dear, damned, distracting town, farewell!'

but we can't take *our* final congé this side of Vauxhall Bridge. For miles beyond that hideous specimen of engineering skill lie streets and squares and terraces, which no one but their inhabitants ever see except upon the Derby Day. No wonder housemaids line the rails of 'Beulah Lodge,' and pretty school-girls rush to the windows of Minerva House. If you, dear Miss de Browne Browne, who may be conning over this page in Mayfair—if you, I say, lived in Laburnum Villas, or Acacia Cottage, with a serious aunt, for three hundred and sixty-four days in the year, you too would be glad to see a little 'life' on the three

* It was reported that snow had fallen at 4 A.M. in the neighbourhood of London.

hundred and sixty-fifth. As our carriage rolls along, we pass a thousand houses, the inmates of which appear to derive their perennial stock of amusement from this morning's fun. See that stout old mansion of Queen Anne's time, with curiously wrought-iron gates in front, don't its red bricks seem to blush the redder at the scene? Do those heavy transomed windows ever look more cheerful than when filled with happy faces on the Derby Day? The road is quickly crowded with a throng in which traps run four deep along the way. Cab, clarence, brougham, and waggonette, dog-cart, barouche, and sociable, all are here as usual, trundling side by side with 'one-oss chays' and lively little tax-carts. Affairs begin to look more cheerful. Who said it was going to rain all day? Not a drop now, upon my word. I put down my UMBRELLA with a gleam of hope—which not even Admiral Fitzroy, the sturdy weather-prophet, could have denied me at that moment. The occupants of lumbering, heavy-laden vans begin to peep behind their canvas curtains at the world without. We, in our turn, get hasty glimpses of humanity inside those wondrous vehicles. We see the ale jug passing round, and long 'churchwarden' pipes crossing each other in a cloud of fragrant smoke. We see Mary-Janes and Jemimaranns smirking at their sweethearts on the opposite bench. The more sophisticated ladies sit near the door, whence they can enjoy the prospect and hear the chance compliments of the road, in addition to those of their swains inside.

'The maids of merry Hingle-land 'ow by-youthful are they,'

cries a gallant youth from a baker's cart to a very charming young person in a char-à-banc; and upon my word the popular ballad has a deal of truth in it. Where are there such women in the world? I don't care what class you select. The upper ten thousand—the lower ten million—in every sphere of English life there is beauty, and beauty of a high order too. 'Well, but,'

some of my untravelled readers may say, 'that is the case all over the world.' Pardon me. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule, but *as a rule* it is *not* the case in France, it is *not* the case in Germany, no, nor in sunny Italy neither, for all her vaunted romance and ancient chivalry. Are there a dozen Parisian grisettes, or 'bonnes' from the Faubourg St.-Germain who could compare with the same number of London milliners or maid-servants? What is a Bavarian *bäuerin* beside an English milkmaid? Even the sirens of Capri must yield the palm to Lancashire witches. To appreciate the charms of our countrywomen, we must have lived some time abroad. Let any unprejudiced youth roam for six months across the Channel, and I will abide by his verdict the first day he lands at Dover.

If the bacchanalian toast of 'woman and wine' is no longer shouted at the tables of the great, the occupants and drivers of the pleasure-vans to-day seem to parody the sentiment by dividing their attention between 'the ladies and beer.' At every public-house along the road we pass a little caravan of carts and gigs, halting to let excursionists fill bottles with pale ale or order 'something short' across the bar. We have all of us heard the five great pleas for drinking—

'A friend, good wine, or being dry,
Or lest I should be, by-and-by,
Or *any other reason why.*'

I am afraid it is the 'any other reason' which chiefly influences our friends on this occasion. It certainly is not good wine which is not to be found here, if even it could be afforded by these good folks, and as for being *dry*, or any probability of such a condition, it is out of the question to-day. Slowly and steadily the rain begins to drop, and again I have recourse to my umbrella. This occasions some sarcastic remarks from a cynical dustman, who, unprovided with a similar implement himself, is driving in his homely chariot, attended by his wife and various pulverulent friends to Epsom. He asks me whether I

am afraid of being washed off my seat, begs to remind me that this is the sort of weather which certain water-fowl rejoice in, and kindly inquires whether I am prepared to swim in case of an emergency. I answer in terms of equal irony, that the showers must necessarily interfere with the practice of his profession—inform him that I am aware of his appropriating the silver fork which he found at the bottom of his basket on Friday fortnight, and finally remark that the nature of his head-dress would render the use of an umbrella superfluous, all of which he receives with infinite good-humour, and after facetiously referring to the possibility of my being engaged on Sunday, drives on lustily, splashing through the mire.

Our next *compagnons de voyage* are some dozen swells mounted on a newly-painted drag, and well equipped with waterproofs. For the credit of British pluck it must be remarked that despite the rain they are one and all 'outsiders'—the windows below being only closed upon a hamper of champagne and one of those compendious wicker baskets which Fortnum and Mason know how to fill so well. Two imperturbable flunkies sit behind, folding their arms in the traditional manner peculiar to their calling. I say traditional, for I never yet saw footmen in this capacity dispose of their upper limbs in any other way. Is it part of their profession? Do they practise this portion of their duty before entering service? or is extra remuneration required for this becoming attitude? I think when I can afford to play the pleasant game of 'coachman,' and join the Drag Club driving through the Park, I shall get two 'dummies' made in Baker Street, after this much-approved and fashionable model, and rig them out completely in cockaded hats and drab great coats and whiskers. One need not then have any fears about the change of their position; the dignity of my 'four in hand' would thus be admirably preserved; and as for standing at the horses' heads in case of need, a stable boy inside would do the business.

Attracted by the splendour of this equipage, the ragged Bedouins of the Epsom Road begin to perform those wonderful gyrations on their hands and feet which excite the admiration of country visitors and the indignation of old, white-vested cockneys in our London streets. In honour of the Derby they have stained their features with a bright brick red, thus emulating the appearance of those lissome sprites of late associated with British pantomime. Bands of Ethiopian serenaders, too, whose dusky complexion, spuriously derived from oil and lamp-black, is doomed to be changed into the tint of octoroon by passing showers, strike banjo and guitar along our path. While from the top of many a laden 'bus we hear the strains of the French horn, which perhaps may cheer the lonely hours, but oftener provokes the wrath of studious bachelors.

As we trundle on our way, the nature of the route begins to change. The stern old mansions, with trim garden fronts, grow few and far between; the newly-painted rails and whitewashed doorsteps of suburban life yield to the hedgerows and green meadow-land of open country. Down, down comes the rain, slowly—steadily—pitilessly—splash, splash, go the horses' hoofs and carriage wheels through the liquid road soil. Are there any living creatures here who do not grumble loudly at the weather? Yea, by my troth, two stout young ducks are paddling in the pond of Mitcham Common, and seem to like the weather mightily. I grow vindictive, and grudge even to those amphibious innocents their short-lived pleasure. Aha, my feathered friends! I think, quack away; pop your little foolish heads under water (oh, that we *all* could liquidate our bills with such facility!), and elevate the obverse of your plumous bodies above the surface of the water. Enjoy yourselves while you may. Your time has yet to come. *Mihi hodie: cras tibi!* This morning I bow submissive to the Fates, but a culinary Nemesis may ere long decide *your* fate, and

fill your little wanton frames with sage and onions.

Approaching nearer to the scene of action, we find the carriages increase in number, and now and then converge so rapidly from various points that a temporary block becomes inevitable. It is on these occasions that the solemn dignity of Plush unbends before the need of circumstance. As often as a check is felt along the road, John Thomas and Chawles Jeames unfold their arms with condescension, and hold them out like railway signals as a warning to the vehicles behind. In some instances this sudden pull up is managed very dexterously; but ever and anon a sudden crash reminds us that some clumsy driver has allowed his carriage-shaft to enter the back of his neighbour's chariot, eliciting some pretty smart reproofs from the gentlemen behind.

'Now then, clumsy! where are you driving to? You're a nice sort of jarvey, *you* are, not to lift the right wing of that 'ere bluebottle off your friend's vehicle, without smashing the poor thing agin the panels with that ugly pole of yourn,' cries a satirical costermonger to the unlucky Jehu.

'You go to Tartarus!' retorts that gentleman, 'and mind your own business. Who told you to interfere with me? You'd much better have taken that old screw of yours out with the turnip-tops this morning, than come where you're not wanted.'

'Don't you say nothing to me about no turnip-tops, *gardener*,' replied the other in a tone of withering irony, 'nor collyflowers neither; suppose I *did* forget to call for 'em this morning. I knew fast enough you wouldn't touch the cabbage-beds to-day—cos vy? you got your boots blacklead over night to play the coachman down to Hepsom. *I* knows you, *I* does. *I* see yer nailing up that past participle old pear-tree in the back garden yesterday,' &c. &c. &c.

With such playful badinage as this the pauses on the road are much enlivened, until at last we take a final leave of bricks and mortar, and diverge by various routes towards

our destination. Ours happened to lie through a thickly-wooded lane, with beech and elm on either side, stretching their young - leafed branches right across the path, and sprinkling us with heavy showers of rain-water as we brushed by. One wretched cockney on a drag was here deprived of that most useless of traditional vanities, a blue veil, which having absorbed all the moisture that had trickled down his (once) white hat, had got entangled in the foliage and now was dangling down, a melancholy spectacle, in mid air. The drivers flicked it with their whips, the girls snatched at it from the vans, but there it hung, soaked through and through, a solemn warning of the vanity of human hopes, a dismal evidence of our uncertain climate, and a damp and dreary souvenir of the Derby Day.

A short cut across some private grounds, which we are allowed by the gatekeeper to make for a small consideration, and a strong pull up a stiffish bit of hill bring us at length to the main road again, half a mile or so this side the Course. Here we rejoin the string of carriages which plough their way with difficulty through the soil. Narrowly escaping an avalanche of humanity which threatened us in the shape of an excursion van, whose wheels, hopelessly entangled, and 'slewed round' on sloping ground, bade fair to overthrow the freight above them, we struggle on past Tattenham Corner, and at last find alongside the ropes, seeking that sovereign's worth of standing room which Mr. Dorling has kindly allotted to us on payment of the coin. Where would we like to pull up?—that was the point. Should it be in the third rank opposite the Grand Stand or in the second rank a little further off, or in the first rank next to that there 'bus? Such was the momentous question addressed to Mr. Joliffe by at least a dozen of those *helping hands* (and very dirty hands they are too!) who swarm upon a race-course to-day, just as they crowded round a capsized cab last night, will volunteer their services as linkmen at a 'drum,'

jacks-in-the-water at a regatta, or what not, to-morrow: when they have done their work (which no one asks them to do) they will ask to be 'remembered,' i. e., paid. If you give them sixpence apiece they will want a shilling. If a shilling, they are of opinion that you ought to 'make it eighteenpence,' and so on. Having at length selected 'the first rank near the 'bus' for our station, our coachman and footman (who of course would have been utterly unequal to the task themselves) are assisted by these worthies, at the rate of about six men per horse, to unharness those quadrupeds and roll the carriage back 'agin' the ropes. This feat having been accomplished, and our helping hands having retired grumbling because their time was not considered more valuable than to be paid for at the rate of five hundred a year, we take off our wrappers and overcoats, shut down our umbrellas (thank goodness, it has again ceased raining), and look about us. The Grand Stand is poorly filled, but there is a tolerable muster of *profanum vulgus* on the Course in overalls and waterproofs, roaming about upon the springy turf. Threading our way among the crowd, we make our way up to that great centre of attraction, the betting ring. Have we anything 'on' the event? Did we back the favourite or the winning horse that day? Did we accept the invaluable 'tip' which Mr. Fetlock advertises in the 'Vita Tintinnabuli' for the small fee of eighteenpence? These are points on which I prefer to maintain a mysterious silence. We rove about the outer circle (as for the inner ring, the *sanctum sanctorum* of Tattersallians, none but subscribers can penetrate that sacred sphere), and come across those dismal specimens of sporting life, the third-rate betting men. A restless, anxious time of it they have, no doubt, in making up their greasy books. There is something half ludicrous, half melancholy in the voice of that youth who, freckled as to features and seedy as to raiment, leans across the railings, and rolls his bloodshot eyes about in search of custom.

'I want to bet agin "Ospodar!"' cries the misguided young man. 'I want to bet agin the favourite. I want to bet agin the field—Yes, I'll lay you 4 to 1 agin Lord Clifden—or I'll lay you 25 to 1 agin Tom Fool. Who'll back the field agin the favourite? Yes, I book you 15 to 1 agin Scamander—in sovs. or "flimsies." Come, gen'lemen—can't we do a little bis'ness? Who'll give a undred to foive agin Lord Glasgow's lot? I want to bet agin "Ospodar—" and so on, *da capo*. They say that these gentlemen are as 'safe as the Bank;' that 'flimsies' invested with them are honourably repaid; that they are well known on every course in England; and that the slightest deviation from the paths of pecuniary rectitude would soon be fatal to their interests. Their lower limbs, it seems, are not of that strictly Ethiopian character that one might imagine at first sight. Nor is this latter fact entirely their own fault. '*Non cuius homini contingit,*' &c. It is not every one who can pass through that strange curriculum of study—who has acquired enough sang froid and ready wit and superficial gentility as to be able to graduate as a thorough *leg*. One may almost assume it as an axiom that your most accomplished swindler must have been, at some time of his life at least, a gentleman. A *low* adventurer, unless he be a born genius, cannot play that noble game.

It is somewhat of a relief to turn from such canaille, from all this turfy vulgar throng to the fresh smiling faces of a few young boys who, under the protection of perhaps a somewhat injudicious but indulgent Paterfamilias, have come down to see the fun. The weather is unpropitious certainly, but it is their first Derby Day, and long will they remember it.

Presently there is a slight commotion on the Glasgow Balcony, and a rumour circulates among the crowd that the fair young man who stands there shaking hands with Admiral Rous and General Peel is Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, who this morning makes his *début* at Epsom. Prince Louis of Hesse,

and Major Teesdale, and Captain Westerweller are also pointed out, rightly or wrongly, by the crowd below, who presently give vent to British loyalty in a hearty cheer.

Soon after this, the clanging of a bell and the shout of sturdy Peelers marching to and fro, announce the advent of the first 'event.' The Epsom Town Plate is to be run for—the Course is cleared—and back we all rush to the carriage.

It was not a very brilliant affair, indeed must never seem to be beside the one of all-absorbing interest—just as the opening vaudeville at a theatre is listened to with some impatience, because at its conclusion some eminent tragedian appears in Hamlet—just as the genre pictures and portraits of 'a gentleman' are hurried over at an exhibition until we stand before the work of Frith or Millais—so any equine struggle on the Epsom Course sinks into utter insignificance before the Derby Stakes. Mr. Clay's Selection proved an excellent choice. In sporting lingo, he had the best of the start—made all the running, and won 'cleverly' by half a length—followed by the Merry Maid and Libellous.

We now turned attention to our hamper, and improvised a jolly little buffet upon the carriage seat. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good, and the sou'-wester which drenched our over-coats and filled the roads with mud had carried some advantage with it. Our lobster salad was not gritty with the flying dust, nor was there a single fly to be found in the mustard. The cold lunch was really cold—not in that tepid, inconsistent state which has been long associated with this anniversary. As for the champagne, it might have just been brought from Mr. Joliffe's cellar, so excellent was its condition. Cork after cork flew out with pleasant music as the feast began. While we are banqueting, a group of hungry gipsies crowd around the trap and beg to be permitted to reveal our fate. Thinking these ladies have come hither with less a soul for prophecy than an eye to spoons, we warn them off, although they call us *pretty gen-*

lemen, and promise each of us a store of luck. I am to have a large fortune left me very shortly by a distant relative (distant indeed! I only wish he was within a telescopic range!); Mr. Joliffe is informed with the utmost gravity that there is a dark-eyed darling waiting for him, by whose espousal he may expect nine children, all boys—the youngest of whom will be a credit to his papa. Unmoved by this flattering intelligence, we again suggest that the weird sisters should move off, and even hint that a reference to the police will be necessary unless they comply with our request.

With a scornful laugh, they point to a little *mêlée* a few yards to the rear of our carriage, where, sad to relate, we see a member of the force alluded to supported by two brother Peelers, reeling along and beating his legs like threshing flails upon the turf, and declaring that his name is Robert Ridley, O, and several other aliases. He also announces his intention of not going home till morning, and says he should be glad to see Mr. Dorling *or any other man*, who would oblige him to take that step. Poor Bobby! it was a cruel thing to ply him with champagne; it was a bitter draught—that last half tumbler. Was it for this he donned those sober skirts and leather belt? for this he reared upon his head that hat so shiny and inflexible—now smashed in many folds upon his eyes? I never saw a man so utterly, so hopelessly drunk. What shall we say? *Humanum est errare*. Even policemen sometimes yield to mortal weaknesses. The gipsies are succeeded by that traditionally presuming mendicant—the doll-seller. What in the name of Notes and Queries has the Derby Day to do with dolls? Who was the first inebriated idiot that planted those wooden symbols of humanity in his hat-band? With a certain order of pleasure-seekers at Epsom this mode of decoration seems indispensable. To-day, perhaps, the dolls are somewhat at a discount, owing to the weather. The merchant cannot find a ready sale for his ligneous infants, and dismally offers whole families of them for sixpence.

Our déjeuner concluded, we dismount again and *loaf* about, as Yankees say, this side the ropes. And here the falling off from former years is wofully apparent. The horrid drizzling rain has had its influence. Damp acrobats lounge listlessly about—no longer heroes in the public gaze. During the whole time we were on the ground, I only saw one solitary Aunt Sally—in a crinoline, it is true, but alone. As for ‘three throws a penny,’ I believe I might have had *six* for the usual charge. Such are the vicissitudes of a Derby Day under the influence of our fickle climate.

The carriages are ranged four deep along the line—barouche and chariot, phaeton and drag—locked by their wheels in hopeless intricacy. To find one’s way through these is like attempting to thread the labyrinth at Hampton Court. Steps, wheels, and rumbles form in turn the perches of *al fresco* diners. Young England lolls upon his cushioned seat draining a glass of sparkling Clicquot, or lights with dainty kid-enveloped fingers the choicest of havannahs. Here and there we see a sturdy sportsman to whom the Epsom Course recalls old glories. I was introduced to one old veteran who had not missed the Derby Day for half a century, and still enjoyed the scene. The ladies are not present in full force, and those we see are dressed with something like a weatherwise attention to the chance of rain. Sirens there are, no doubt, within those natty little broughams attired in mauve and lavender, in tulle, and silk, and Valenciennes; but rose-coloured blinds (so best, perhaps,) intercept our view, and presently all thoughts of other *bellis* yield to the clanging of that long-expected sound which sends us all back to our seats again, and announces that *THE RACE, par excellence*, is coming off.

By a poetical and long-accepted license, novelists and journalists are supposed to possess the gift of ubiquity. How, otherwise, could those interesting conversations between Adolphus and Amelia be overheard on the beach at Brighton, in the very next chapter to that which

describes a tiger-hunt in India? If you looked upon the sporting correspondent of 'The Times' as one responsible individual, you would imagine that he had wasted an hour in watching the thirty-two false starts for the Derby—set off at a sharp trot when Tambour Major was withdrawn—run to and fro, note-book in hand, among the horses when they *did* get away, stopped a minute at the 'spill' to inquire after Saccharometer's poor feet, and how David Hughes fared after his fall, and finally overtook the field at the winning-post in time to notice the result. In this light, I, too, see the start; witness the obstinacy of Count Batthyany's lot, which all the skill of Wells's jockeying cannot overcome. Instead of putting his best leg foremost, this wretched brute kicks out behind, or stands as the wooden steed before the gates of Troy. At last they're off; the favourite wasting his strength in useless competition with those ill 'weeds' which *run* apace. I see Lord Glasgow's jacket in the van and Bright Cloud tearing after with Safeguard, Donnybrook, and Early Purl upon their heels. I lie in imagination behind the furzes, and watch Mr. Capel's horse now take the lead; now lose it hopelessly. Again I am in spirit at the three-quarter mile post, and notice Donnybrook struggling with Lord Clifden. I see the 'scrimmage' as the horses near Tattenham Corner, and Johnny Daly, rolling from the back of Baron Rothschild's colt; while Saccharometer, too, goes off without his rider. Now the Utopian King is surely gaining ground, with Maccaroni, Gillie, and Blue Mantle. And now the favourite is again ahead, and must be presently the winner. Oh, the excitement of those last few seconds! Just in the nick of time, and with consummate judgment, Challenor 'calls on' Mr. Naylor's colt and makes him victor at the post. The race is run, and MACCARONI is the winner.

When the unbiassed reader considers that all the time I have been meekly standing on the coachman's box leaning on my umbrella, without which support, I should assuredly

have been pushed off my perch by a zealous sporting gentleman behind, and also bears in mind that Dorling's 'kerrect card' was about as intelligible to me as 'Bradshaw's Railway Guide'; that I was deplorably ignorant of the names, to say nothing of the colours and weights of the riders, and that, even with these data, I should have been utterly incompetent to identify the horses in that fractional part of a second during which they appeared before my eyes—when, I say, these circumstances are taken into consideration, I think some credit is due to me for the trouble I have incurred in arriving at these particulars; for some of which I am indebted to the kindness and sagacity of Mr. James Joliffe (who drew me a plan of the field, showing the various positions of the horses the very next morning), and for the rest, to an attentive perusal of the morning papers.

Up go the numbers 7, 15, and 3 at the post. Off go the carrier pigeons—north, south, east, and west, on their respective missions. The crowd breaks in upon the Course from every side, gradually thickening into one dense mass in front of the Grand Stand. The usual ceremony of weighing in is gone through, and the Derby Day—or, at least, that part of it we came to see—is at an end.

To leave the ground at once, however, is no such easy matter; nor have we any particular wish to hurry. We are in the inner ranks, and a dozen carriages must move away before we can put our horses 'to.' Besides, three more races are to come off, and we have plenty of champagne; what is to prevent our filling up the interval by drinking it? We toast Mr. Naylor and the winner, and Lord St. Vincent and the quondam favourite, and the Prince of Wales and his blooming bride, and Mr. Dorling (the *correctest* card, of course), and Admiral Rous and the Jockey Club, and Mr. Joliffe, our hospitable entertainer; and are just deliberating whose health we can next propose, when the Manor Plate is run for, and Mr. Rayner's Dirt Cheap proclaimed the winner. After this, the 'helping

hands' are again in request to get the carriage out, and presently we are ploughing our way through the creamy quagmire which lies broad and deep on Epsom Downs. Once more the 'chaff' begins, and this time much more heartily; for though the rain is drizzling down, a little wine has qualified that fall of water, and every one is in good spirits. Subject as most of us are to weather influence, I think good clicquot and good company might make the dreariest of wet days seem bearable. And for those hardy strugglers through the mud—those bold pedestrians ready with winged words and shafts of irony—shall we not eulogize their pluck?—don't we deplore that sad terrestrial influence which chains their boots to mother Earth? If (as Mark Tapley hath it) there ever was credit in being jolly, these geological adventurers deserve it. To me there is a sort of heroism in joking on a quicksand, in being

funny while you flounder through morasses. That Spartan youth who allowed the fox to eat a way into his waistcoat rather than acknowledge his theft—old Mathews cutting jokes at the lecture table over his poor bandaged feet below—are not more objects of our respect and sympathy than these good mud-bedabbled punsters whose wit is waterproof, and swifter than their legs can travel, whose philosophy is peripatetic with a vengeance.

Sitting aloft, by Mr. Coachman's side, in the full enjoyment of a good cheroot, I listen lazily to the public 'badinage,' which, once a year, sober John Bull indulges in; reflect with satisfaction that the rain has interfered so little with our fun, and confess that the Derby is a great and national event, interesting in all its aspects, including that which may sometimes present itself UNDER AN UMBRELLA.

JACK EASEL.

Gog and Magog: their Little Party.

IN the month of May, in a certain year, a great scaffold had been builded at much cost within the Guildhall of the good City of London: for it had been bruited abroad that the two mighty warders who keep watch over the liberties and privileges of that ancient city, to the joy and comfort of the dwellers therein, had sent greeting to the youthful Prince of Wales and his fair spouse of Denmark to come thither, there to make great cheer with much goodly company.

So the labourers wrought night and day to finish the scaffolds, seeing that the roof of the hall lacked joiners' and masons' work, which would be long a-doing, and knowing that they would have to take away their planks and beams before such work could be even so much as begun; for such was the custom of the City of London, to show the marvelous skill of their craftsmen, and that there was wealth to spare, that needed none of that parsimony which hath been likened to the careful paring of a cheese.

The last plank being carried away late in the evening, the watchman made his rounds to secure the inner doors and the great gate, but leaving a certain entrance unfastened, waiting near which he listened to the wind that blew high in the streets; for it was a mighty blustering night. So overcome was he with sleep, that somebody knocked thrice before he awoke and opened the door. Silently, and as men near distraught, there came in the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, and the reverend commons of the City, by the door that openeth over the crypt hard by the Town-clerk his office, and assembled in the hall at its western end. Then the chimes told it to be one of the clock, and the giants called Gog and Magog came down, they having departed from their daily custom of dinner at noontide, that this midnight meeting should be holden in secret.

As they reached the ground, and looked down upon the assembly,

met in furred gown of mazarine to do them homage, Magog struck thrice with his heavy staff, and there arose a vapoury odour as from a hundred simmering turtles, whereat the Council sniffed, and broke into a great shout; for, coming from the further end of the hall, they beheld a company of cooks bearing a huge table, on which was set such store of toothsome dainties as might make a man's mouth water withal; but, to their dismay, the elder giant motioned it away, saying that he had no need—so that the vapour alone remained.

'Ye come not here to feast,' he said, frowning; and at his great voice the very sheriffs trembled. 'Know ye that your Prince and ours is mindful to do us honour, as royalty has done time out of mind, so that the estates of this realm shall meet to the good of both—the lawgivers of the crown's majesty with our aldermen, famous for their subtil wisdom—the nobles of the court with you the merchant princes of the land.'

Here there arose a smothered cry from the depths of a hidden gallery, as of one calling his fellow by the name of *Walker*.

Then Magog cried out, in great wrath, 'What caitiff is this? Let him be at once seized and brought here before us.' But no man essayed to go; for there arose a fresh vapour at that more distant part of the hall—a whitish cloud, with an opening in the middle thereof, where a bright light shone. Then again spake Magog—'To help the great work ye have to do, ye must needs look upon the past, and see how the ancient glory of the City has been fitly manifest in this place.'

Thereupon, while every man stood agape, the cloud parted still further, and its trembling centre burst asunder, showing a vast space beyond. In this space a great crowd of men moved hither and thither, clad in the quaint garments of old English citizens. Some stood apart in groups, and seemed to talk with wild ges-

tures, while others looked on with heavy brooding faces, shadowing ill tidings.

Presently a sturdy band of men-at-arms cleared a way through the crowd, and there mounted to a raised chair one of short stature, with a handsome, cunning face, and all in silken and velvet clothes under a short mantle.

As he held out his white hand to speak, there was a great tumult. Some of the men cast their flat caps into the air, while others stamped upon the ground and clutched their staves; seeing which, the speaker scowled upon them for a moment.

Here the voice from that same dim gallery cried, 'Bravo, Kean;' and at the unseemly noise Magog strode full across the hall, and, but that he was held by Gog, would have swung his axe clean through the timbers. But the vapour met and parted again, and there stood another great crowd, where a woman, wan and withered, stood before the king and a bishop, who seemed to accuse her of some evil thing. There was a dead, sullen look on men's faces; but the bishop waxed purple in his rage, and at length she was sentenced, and borne away by men clothed in a sort of monkish livery. Meantime the gross carcass of the king was raised by titled lacqueys from its chair.

Sundry times these strange shows came and went; but it was always a man or woman charged before judges and accusers. One sweet, pale gentlowoman came in, and, as she walked with a pitiful smile to the bar where she stood on trial for her life, a darkness like the gloom of winter fell on the place, and men bowed their heads and women wept. Men's minds seemed overcast, as well, indeed, they might, when that poor royal lady was to die.

A citizen came next before a new tribunal, and once more the caps flew into the air, and the staunch jury held up their hands for the prisoner, though they were menaced by certain nobles of the court, who shook their clenched hands and cast dark looks upon the people.

The last of these strange presentments showed a priest in the garb of the Jesuits; and when he was sen-

tenced, and the crowd vanished, Magog spake again to the commons.

'See ye these things?—they are but a part of the history of the Guildhall; and I would fain have all men know how great a place this city doth hold in statecraft, and as an ensample for the commonweal.'

'It doth fetch tenpence a pound,' quoth one of the council, who, fearing for what he had said, vainly tried to hide behind one more lusty than himself.

'Are not you,' said the giant, deftly smiting the offender upon the poll with his forefinger, 'the successors of those worthies who withstood the power of the court? and doth not this hall, and the wards and liveries and councils joined therewith, impress the minds of men with a greatness and a majesty which hath too often raised but envy and ill liking? nay, hath not all the glorious pageantry of your Lord Mayor a hold upon the vulgar? and are not we the guardians of this great state, the greatest of all civic——'

'Shams!' This was the word which did sound through the hall, and cried out so loud, too, that it echoed from the roof thereof.

'It shall go hard, but I will know who is this varlet,' then roared Magog, while that the assembly did cry 'Shame!' and 'Turn him hence!' and he made a mighty leap unto that part of the hall, and again would have done some havoc, but that he had grown somewhat stiff by long standing, and his sword coming between his legs did bring him down with a woful squelch to the earth. Then the aldermen and the council gathered round him,—when by the help of Gog he once more stood upon his feet,—and entreated him to clemency, and one of the most reverend of them advised him how it came about that there was some who had cried out in the hall, and that they were amongst those who called themselves teachers of the people, or advocates of the vulgar, being known by a certain byword or nickname, as 'the Press;' that they claimed to enter into all public assemblies by virtue of their office, and that some of them had often

spoke grievous words of the state and dignity of the City, though others had done them fair courtesy.

Then would Magog have flown out into wrathful speech, but Gog clapped his huge hand upon his mouth, and said that it was his turn to be heard.

'One would easily think,' said Magog, 'that thou wert a Celtic or Irish, rather than a Saxon giant.'

'Marry, and why?' quoth Gog.

'Because that thou art known by thy *coarse way*,' said the other; and at this merry and truly civic conceit there broke forth a peal of laughter which made the old hall to ring.

'Thou must poke thy Grecian* nose into every platter,' answered Gog; 'but I tell thee 'tis my turn.' Then looking to that place whence the voices came: 'I have a word to you, fair sirs,' said he; 'nor though I am short of speech, am I the more a sham; nay, both for Magog and myself, though we are the offspring of Corinaeus and Gog-Magog, I will not deny that we bore no bodily part in the deeds that ye have seen pictured yonder, but were born in the house of Captain Richard Saunders in King Street. Still to us it is given to represent those mighty champions, and to bear their names. In such wise 'the pageants of this great city, and its ancient modes and customs, are to the common people, and even to the learned a remembrance of great deeds; it being rather that thing which is signified or remembered than the mere sign or memorial which hath in it a true dignity. It would ill become ye to scoff at what hath been done, even though the present show of it shall have waxed faint and gone out of date, since there remains the fruit of it in liberty and safety. That both liberty and safety have been well won needs no surer proof than that ye are here to-night.'

Then there arose a confused sound of applause, and a cry of 'Two to one on the giant,' to stay which Gog waved his hand, and the cloud parting again showed some brave sights; and first a brave king and

his fair queen coming in with all their court to a mighty feast, at which many gay men-at-arms were among the guests. The tables were set with huge dishes of brawn, with boars' heads, capons, haunches, peacocks, and pies filled with cunning devices. The stoups were filled with right good liquor, and the Lord Mayor, standing up, pledged the King, afterwards walking towards that side where there burnt a fire of fragrant wood upon the hearth. In his hand he held a bond for sixty thousand pounds, bearing the royal sign, and even while the King gazed, astonished, he cast it into the flame amongst the red brands. Then the feast went on right merrily, and the assembly in the hall, who looked with might and main, groaned in spirit, as they saw the viands disappear, and the flasks thrown empty beneath the table.

Another banquet and another king—a dark, ill-favoured monarch, but a roysterer, a boon companion, and a right merry jester, who turneth to take 't'other bottle' at the asking of the Mayor, when his foot is on the threshold.

Then the cloud rolled back, and as the giants joined hands, Gog spake for them both:—

'One other royal visit ye have yourselves seen here: the best and the most pure and honest of them all. We would have you make that which is to come still gayer, if you can—more loving or more loyal ye cannot make it. Let those who call themselves instructors of the people come, and they shall say that whatever else hath failed us, our hospitable welcome is no false seeming.

'Our parting word with ye is this—As traders, get all that ye can; as officials, keep all that ye get.'

Then these same giants, Gog and Magog, leaped again to their places, to keep watch and ward by the western window, and still distraught the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, and the Commons went their way. The last behest of the giant they dutifully obeyed, for, taking to themselves all the billets or cards of invitation, they kept them right faithfully, so that, as it afterwards fell out, many a city dame brushed

* Magog, or Corinaeus, was a Trojan, who came hither with Brutus.

skirts with peeresses who had but that day left the counter or the stall, and many a maid, fresh from a city dancing-school, essayed to foot it in the presence of royalty. And there need be small wonder thereat, seeing that he who did guide the musique was right cunning in all that hath to do with the viols, and the trumpets, and the bassoons, and did cause such stirring and delicate melody that one might have danced though he had gone upon crutches.

As for those who had quaintly named themselves 'the Press,' they deserved small favour, as ill-conditioned and upstart braggarts, with high-sounding pretences; but not following the giant's meaning, those of the Commons who made of themselves a council of entertainment granted to those of whom they themselves had aught either to hope or to fear leave to see the show, in the belief that they would thus gain favourable report.

Soon the hammers sounded in the Guildhall, arches sprang up to the old roof, which so sorely wanted mending; gorgeous colours and gilded devices shone upon the walls; a thousand lights sparkled amidst a thousand orient flowers, hung in gold baskets; great bravery in arras, mirrors and costly gew-gaws filled the chambers, and over the great yard, hard by the courts of law, there arose another hall, built of hewn timber, and with gilded pillars; the front of it, streetward, veiled, tent-wise, with striped bed-tick, as a foil to the inner glories of that place.

And there in the streets of the City the people waited both long and patiently for the coming of the Prince, and the Princess mistress of all hearts. The Lord Mayor had been grievously ill, and was but newly come from Brighthelmstone, where some scoffers said he had been privately admonished by a dancing-master, such being the common slander of the vulgar. But the Aldermen and Commons had lost their ancient courage or were

occultly disposed to amity; for a certain Lord of the Parliament having a desire to be master of all the constables and men-at-arms throughout the kingdom, had aforetime spoken grievous words against the constables of the City; and now, fearful that they might make true his words, or willing to test those who were on his part, they would have his constables all the way from the Palace to the midst of Cheapside, in such force that they well-nigh outnumbered the crowd at some parts, and standing with their backs to the people, whom they compelled to pass behind them, left great sport for the thieves and cut-purses, for that they had not eyes in the back of their heads to see withal. Added to these were the horse soldiers, who were full of merry conceits, making their steeds prance backwards on the toes of the people, to their great comfort and delight. In the Churchyard of Saint Poule, there had collected next the shops, where no constables were, a great number of those who are called catchpennies, or sellers of pennyworths, together with beggars and other amusing rogues. But the merriest jest was the quaintness, and it may be said the vileness of many of the carriages which brought the City dames from their lodgings outside the town; many of these were such as had survived the wreck at the time of the great illumination, and had not been cleaned since then; and to see the great hooped and furbelow'd skirts of the silk and stuff gowns hanging out of the windows, and filling the whole of the inside, even above the heads of the riders, was marvellously lively, and, indeed, kept the crowd in good humour, while they waited for the royal suite.

But this goeth beyond the chronicle of the little party held by Gog and Magog in the Guildhall; the further account of the great assembly following having been stated by others, as was, indeed, to be expected.

A REQUIEM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

I.

WHAT! the ashes are still a-glow:
 What! the dead past will not lie
 In the grave that we heaped, six months ago,
 With anger and bitterness, you and I.

II.

You told me no ghost from that grave could rise,
 You told me the past was for ever slain;
 But last night, you know, I looked in your eyes,
 And with eyes like yours words are sometimes vain.

III.

And standing close to you there in the crowd—
 Close to you, but how far apart!—
 All the old pain cried out aloud,
 All the old madness rang through my heart.

IV.

Six months are short, and our love was strong;
 And love is warm, and duty is cold;
 And the world to which you now belong,
 With all its conventions, with all its gold,

V.

Can never, never the place fill up
 That our buried passion has left so blank;
 Can never refill one drop of the cup
 That you and I together drank.

VI.

Forget it! forget the little room,
 The little room so dark and low,
 Where I used to stand in the deep'ning gloom,
 And wait for your step in the street below!

VII.

Forget the first delicious time
 When we watch'd the far sea through the mist!
 Forget the shadow of the lime!
 Forget the window where we kiss'd!

VIII.

And all the words we used to say,
 And all, alas! we never said;
 Can they have utterly passed away?
 Can so much life so soon be dead?

IX.

Yes, duty is honour, and love was disgrace;
 And duty is living, and love in its grave;
 And as we can *not* have the one loved face,
 'Tis wisdom to love the face that we have.

X.

On se range. Our motives grow purer and better;
 We see our old follies with truer sight;
 So take the moral from this poor letter,
 And—look at me once when we meet to night!

DICKENS'S DOGS;

OR,

The Undsect of Fiction.

ONE of the pleasantest workings of that enlarged philanthropy of our time, whose only embarrassment seems the discovery of sufficient grist—as it may be called—for its labour, has happily taken the shape of an enlarged sympathy for an oppressed and long-suffering class of fellow-creatures: the odious intolerance of centuries has been at last happily swept away, and the dog no longer skulks in caves and deserts, the Pariah and Cagot of a civilized community. The days of his persecutions have gone by. A price is no longer set upon his head: neither is he compelled to practise the rites of his peculiar worship—whatever that may be—in the perilous secrecy of the blind alley and the lonely *cul de sac*. Nor is he any longer cast out into the Coliseum a canine martyr— butchered, as it were, to make a Saxon holiday. His is not now a proscribed tribe—the Israelite caste of the animal world—driven into the kennel

ghetto—spat upon—pelted with mud and stones by youthful Arabs of the streets, who are yet Christians and believers. They do not skulk along timorously, with averted eyes and slavish gait, grateful for the withheld kick, or the stone unlaunched, or even for the poor gift of life, which any believer had the privilege of taking from them. The grand day of their redemption has come about. Liberal men of large hearts have agitated that the blessings of a free constitution might be extended to them. The grand boon of emancipation had been conceded to the slave and to the Catholic. It was iniquitous that the dog should rest under disabilities. The vile penal laws which had so long disgraced the statute-book should be abrogated. His chains were struck off (morally speaking, for it was felt that some little restraint in this shape, under judicious restrictions, was still necessary). He could hold and enjoy freehold estates and dwell-

ing-house without interruption or disturbance. He could enter upon any of the learned professions open to his race, and rise, if he had gifts sufficient, to the highest distinctions in the hunting field or the preserve. If he elected to pursue the stage as a profession, and exhibited talents of a high dramatic order, his histrionic efforts were welcomed with the flattering plaudits of an appreciative audience. Nay, the legislature has busied itself with his political *status*, and passed successive Acts of Parliament, which have received the royal assent, which punish severely all outrages against his person. The newer and healthier tone of society, in his regard, encourages him to raise himself from a debased condition not of his own making; to let the schoolmaster go abroad in his ranks; to develop intelligence; to subject themselves to moral and decent restraints; to check those bursts of agrarian violence and outrage—that species of rude White-boyism, as it were—for which the barbarian code of society was in itself only too responsible—to cultivate, in short, the virtues of health, strength, and washing. These things have the new philanthropists and the friends of the dog preached and preached effectively.

This new charity, which takes creatures of all denominations within its pale, and which knows no distinction of paw, or limb, or skin, or hairy coat, has already been attended with prodigious fruit. It has resulted not in a bald, grudging toleration, but in an eager welcome and generous enthusiasm. Already it can be gathered even from their eyes and bearing that they feel, and are proudly conscious of their enfranchisement. There is a bold, independent port—almost manly, and even a splendid arrogance, nearly justifiable. They take the wall in the streets. They look down placidly from flying chariots. The more effeminate are dressed with parti-coloured ribbons, repose on cushions, and accept with a fashionable indifference the eager caresses of ladies of fashion. There is a special police charged with their protection. But far more effectual

than any police, repentant public opinion watches over them jealously. And though, indeed, it hath been insinuated that much of this consideration is to be placed to the account of mere outside and more perishable gifts of form and feature, without regard to that interior worth with which the mind makes the body rich, still fashion fluctuates so impartially, and veers so steadily from one species to the other, that she contrives, by varying whim or fancy, to bring all within the circle of her favours. Hence the ugly and ill-favoured are sure to be esteemed for their blemishes, as are the beautiful for their perfection.

In this paradise there is room for the sleek because they are sleek; for the rough and unkempt precisely because they are rough and unkempt. There may be seen, too, loose outcasts upon the streets—pauper creatures, who, without protest on the part of the humane and those who can feel, are treated with reproach and contumely. But these, it is well understood, are the pauper spendthrifts, the rakes and *mauvais sujets* of their order, who have taken to evil courses and spent their all, and who are now eking out a precarious livelihood by shifty ways and dishonest tricks—specially in the neighbourhood of butchers' stalls, where police are inefficient—have forfeited that fair esteem and protection to which a righteous course of life would have entitled them. And as an instance of the way in which correct public opinion sets itself in protest against such conduct, mark how the respectable tax-paying citizen dog, hurrying down to business with his master—the well-fed, well-clad, canine industrious apprentice—mark with what reprobation he hunts, utterly routs, the trembling, cowering outcast, and disreputable vagrant. And yet he is wholly justified in such conduct; for is not that other a pure canine scamp, whom no dog of station could decently know, and who has brought discredit on the cloth?

Much of this altered tone and liberal toleration is, no doubt, owing to a happy change in the feeling of society. That the old, low canine

bigotry is out of fashion, and a more enlightened sentiment has come in its place, must be, no doubt, set to the account of what is called the spirit of the age. But for the thorough propagation and wholesale popularization of these views, their extension through the villa districts—in short, for the preaching of the new evangel through the length and breadth of the land, two persons—two incomparable artists each in his own walk—are more directly responsible. To Mr. Charles Dickens and Sir Edwin Landseer a grateful canine posterity, if ever it should reach to the necessary development, shall set up the bronze statue or commemorative pillar! It must be recollected that it was Lillibulero that whistled King James out of his three kingdoms.

The painter has pleaded by his canvas and his multiplied engravings, the writer by a broad flood of stories, poured out over the face of the land. The one preaches from the wall; the other, with a far greater command of eye and heart, from a pulpit by the fireside. The painter, with all his wonderful skill, sets his animals in attitudes—gives but canine poses plastiques—the quick eye and intelligent look; he manipulates the hair and skin with a touch infinitely marvellous. He does the most that his tools will let him do; and more than could be credited was within the function of those instruments.

Yet with the novelist, the author of the *Thousand and One English Nights' Entertainment*, is a far greater power, and an infinitely broader variety. For he takes the newly-enfranchised animal within the charmed circle of his characters, sets him down at the fireside and chimney-corner, and furnishes him with quaint reflections of the whims and humours of humanity, playing on them with delicate touches which seem almost earnest, until they really mount to the dignity of a character. The four-footed actors play their little parts, and in a pleasant, complimentary manner become as essential to the piece as the more leading human men and women. By some mystery the

grand magician is assumed to have special knowledge of the interior working of the motives and emotions of the tribe, and by a pleasant fiction reproduces the whole interior idiosyncrasy with a delightful authority which no one seems prepared to question. By this exquisite art we are introduced without surprise to dogs of pleasant humours and agreeable oddities, and without astonishment meet Pumblechook and Mark Tapleys in the ranks of the tribe. They have speaking eccentricities in their wiry hair, droll twists in their whiskers, a knowing expression about the tail, and habitual oddities of manner, just like the grander bipeds.

It is curious, certainly, that fuller attention has not been drawn to this power of our great story-teller—a power significant of a profound study, and a yet more exquisite appreciation of the ways and manners, of the delicate lights and shadows, of animal character—greater than the cold pedantries of Buffon or Cuvier could help them to. It is proposed in this place to dwell a little on this famous gallery of animal sketches, and show by a short meditation on these creations of the novelist what an acute, and at the same time genial and enthusiastic, student he has been. That, out of pen-and-ink uniform, he is a kind patron to animals, is clear. Indeed, we have been told as much in those newly-written prefaces to his novels, which promise to be as entertaining, if not quite so lengthy, as those prefixed to the *Waverley* series. He there writes the history of two ravens, and shows us how they sat for famous Grip. Later on we may be let into the secret of from what originals his sporting-dog portraits were drawn.

Room first of all for a dog of the very lowest extraction, utterly unknown to the canine blue books, without pedigree or breed, the disreputable property of that disreputable housebreaker and noted ticket-of-leave man Mr. William Sikes, a brutal master of a faithful, uncomplaining, patient, much-enduring animal, who is yet of reserved habits, and of intellectuals not very

highly developed. Bull's Eye is this creature's name. He has been reared in the worst company—or rather has reared himself—in a desperate shifty way. Nor is it surprising that his normal gait should be a suspicious, skulking progress along the public ways, or that he should settle it down that the invariable salutation of his tribe by the great human race was a stick or a stone.

Here is Bull's Eye making his bow:

'A white, shaggy dog, with his

face scratched and torn in twenty different places, skulked into the room. "Why didn't you come in afore," said the man, "you're getting too proud to own me afore company, are you?" This command was accompanied by a kick which sent the animal to the other end of the room. He appeared well used to it, however, for he coiled himself up in a corner very quietly, without uttering a sound, and winking his very ill-looking eyes about twenty times in a minute, appears to occupy him-

BULL'S EYE.

self in taking a survey of the apartment.'

Mr. William Sikes has an appointment presently at a low public-house in the filthiest part of Saffron Hill. Here Bull's Eye makes his second appearance. 'A white-coated, red-eyed dog, who occupied himself alternately in winking at his master with both eyes at the same time, and in licking a large fresh cut on one side of his mouth, which appeared to be the result of some recent conflict.'

'"Keep quiet, you warmint; keep

quiet,"' said Mr. Sikes, suddenly breaking silence. Whether his meditations were so intense as to be disturbed by the dog's winking, or whether his feelings were so wrought upon by his reflections that they required all the relief derivable from kicking an unoffending animal to allay them, is matter for argument and consideration. Whatever was the cause, the effect was a kick and a curse bestowed upon the dog simultaneously.

'Dogs are not generally apt to

revenge injuries inflicted on them by their masters; but Mr. Sikes' dog having faults of temper in common with his owner, and labouring, perhaps, at that moment under a powerful sense of injury, made no more ado, but at once fixed his teeth in one of the half-boots, and having given it a good hearty shake, retired, growling, under a form, thereby just escaping the pewter measure which Mr. Sikes levelled at his head.

"You would, would you?" said Sikes, seizing the poker in one hand, and deliberately opening with the other a large clasp knife, which he drew from his pocket. "Come here, you born devil! Come here! D'ye hear?"

'The dog, no doubt, heard, because Mr. Sikes spoke in the very harshest key of a very harsh voice; but appearing to entertain some unaccountable objection to having his throat cut, he remained where he was.' Then follows an unseemly contest. 'The dog jumped from right to left, and from left to right, snapping, growling, and barking: the man thrust, and swore, and struck, and blasphemed; and the struggle was reaching a most critical point for one or other, when, the door suddenly opening, the dog darted out, leaving Bill Sikes with the poker and the clasp knife in his hands.'

In his indignation at this interruption of purpose the gentle house-breaker gives utterance to some pleasant satire on the watchful providence exercised by his country over the well-being of animals.

"I wish you had been the dog, Fagin, half a minute ago."

"Why?" inquired the Jew, with a forced smile.

"Cause Government, as cares for the lives of such men as you, as haven't half the pluck of a cur, lets a man kill his dog as how he likes," replied Sikes, shutting up his knife, with a very expressive look. "That's why."

Still the poor quadruped keeps faithfully to his master, bearing no malice; for suffering is the badge of all his tribe. At the breaking up of that meeting the two principal act-

ors departed together, 'followed at a little distance by the dog, who slunk out of a back yard as soon as his master was out of sight.'

The details of poor Oliver's recapture on the open highway are familiar to all readers, in which nefarious proceeding it cannot be concealed that Bull's Eye played a considerable part. When Mr. Sikes burst out of the beer-shop there was a 'white dog at his heels,' in nowise slack to second his master's views. "Here, Bull's Eye," said he. The dog looked up and growled. "See here, boy," said Sikes, putting his other hand to Oliver's throat, and uttering a savage oath, "if he speaks ever so soft a word, hold him! D'ye mind?" The dog growled again, and, licking his lips, eyed Oliver as if he were anxious to attach himself to his windpipe without any unnecessary delay. "He's as willing as a Christian, strike me blind if he isn't," said Sikes, regarding the animal with a kind of grim and ferocious approval. "Get on, young'un." Bull's Eye wagged his tail in acknowledgment of this unusually endearing form of speech, and, giving vent to another admonitory growl for the benefit of Oliver, led the way onward.'

Later on, among a select company composed of Messrs. Dawkins, Charles Bates, and other gentlemen of the same profession, playful allusion is made to their honourable calling, of which Mr. Dawkins (better known as the Dodger) insists that Bull's Eye is an influential member. "He is the downiest one of the lot." "And the least given to peaching," added Charley Bates. "He wouldn't so much as bark in a witness-box—no, not if you tied him up in one, and left him there without wittles for a fortnight," said the Dodger. "He's a rum dog. Don't he look fierce at any strange cove that laughs or sings when he's in company?" pursued the Dodger. "Won't he growl at all when he hears a fiddle playing; and don't he hate other dogs as ain't of his breed—oh, no!"

"He's an out-and-out Christian," said Charley. This was merely intended as a tribute to the animal's

abilities, but it was an appropriate remark in another sense if Master Bates had only known it; for there are a great many ladies and gentlemen claiming to be out-and-out Christians between whom and Mr. Sikes's dog there exist very strong and singular points of resemblance.'

Bull's Eye does not reappear again until late in the drama, when he is seen sitting by his master's bed on guard, as it were, 'eyeing him with a wistful look, and now pricking up his ears and uttering a low growl as some noise in the street attracted his attention.'

Presently enters the pleasant fraternity lately mentioned, on a visit of comfort to the indisposed burglar, bearing with them several good things in the shape of pies and strong drink.

"Drive him down, Charley," Mr. Sikes said, alluding to Bull's Eye, who was doubtless rendered troublesome by the sight of the cheer.

"I never see such a jolly dog as that," cried Master Bates, doing as he was desired, "smelling the grub like an old lady agoing to market! He'd make his fortun' on the stage, that dog would, and revive the drayma besides."

But, returning again to Bull's Eye, the fortunes of his master and his own have grown to be overcast, and wicked Mr. Sikes is led into commission of that murder which, but for an accident, would have subjected him to the penalty of death at the hands of the common executioner. In spite, however, of kicks, blows, curses, and every degradation, his faithful dog keeps with him—with, indeed, an inconvenient fidelity; for, having done his work, he has to go forth on that wandering journey of his, which reads like a horrid nightmare, 'dragging the dog with him lest he should carry out new evidences of the crime into the streets.' Then, after that awful night's walk, the scenes in the lonely public-houses, and at the village conflagration, he resolves to go back to London, and to destroy his dog, for fear of detection. He resolved to drown him, 'and walked on looking for a pond, picking up a heavy stone and tying

it to his handkerchief as he went. The animal looked up into his master's face while these preparations were making, and, whether his instinct apprehended something of this purpose as the robber's side-long look at him was steadier than ordinary, skulked a little further in the rear than usual, and cowered as he came more slowly along. When his master halted at the brink of a pool, and looked round to call him, he stopped outright.

"Do you hear me call? come here," cried Sikes, whistling. The animal came from the very force of habit, but as Sikes stooped to attach the handkerchief to his throat he uttered a low growl and started back. "Come back," said the robber, stamping on the ground. The dog wagged his tail, but moved not. Here Sikes made a running noose, and called him again. The dog advanced, retreated, paused an instant, turned, and scoured away at his hardest speed. The man whistled again and again, and sat down, and waited in the expectation that he would return. But no dog appeared, and he resumed his journey.'

But the end is at hand. Mr. Sikes is hunted down, and in that exciting scene where he is all but captured, is hanged in a noose of his own make. 'A dog, which had lain concealed till now, ran backwards and forwards on the parapet with a dismal howl, and, collecting himself for a spring, jumped for the dead man's shoulders. Missing his aim he fell into the ditch, turning completely over as he went, and striking his head against a stone, dashed out his brains.'

It will be observed with what art Mr. Dickens has managed, by means of this faithful creature, to inspire an interest in the fortunes of his otherwise repulsive master. And thus the reader is led into the agreeable delusion that there must be still some kind spot in that hardened heart which could inspire such faithfulness. Mr. Dickens has worked this dog-portrait skilfully, and with touches that show he observed their habits long and closely, of which that 'running backwards and forwards on the parapet' before

his spring, and that blinking with both eyes with chun on the ground, are famous instances.

Now, while the snow is deep upon the ground, and it is rough and rasping weather outside, and there are light and warmth inside; while the fire has been swept up, and kettle and cricket are singing matches against each other; while, in short, the sweetest little woman that ever lived and moved inside of a book is waiting for somebody's

return, there comes of a sudden the sound of crunching wheels, and bells most musical, and the lumbering creak of an overcharged waggon; and what with the voice of a man, the sudden and mysterious appearance of a baby, and the tearing in and out of an excited dog, there was soon the what's-his-name to pay—which is the first appearance of famous Boxer. Exquisite indeed is every stroke of this sweet Christmas picture. The world could not

BOXER.

afford to part with a single figure, or quaint bit of furniture, or cranny, or projecting nob. The withdrawal of the old clock and the unwearied mower would leave a chasm; but the absence of Boxer, who does choros after the Greek fashion, would be loss irreparable. What would that little domestic circle, now busy at the fire, and thinking of supper, be without him?

'Boxer, feeling that his attentions were due to the family in general, and must be impartially distributed, dashed in and out with bewildering inconstancy; now describing a circle of short barks round the horse, where he was being rubbed down at the stable-door; now feigning to make savage rushes at his mistress, and facetiously bringing himself to sudden stops; now eliciting a shriek

from Tilly Slowboy in the low nursing-chair near the fire by the unexpected application of his moist nose to her countenance; now exhibiting an obtrusive interest in the baby; now going round and round upon the hearth, and lying down as if he had established himself for the night; now getting up and taking that nothing of a fag-end of a tail of his out into the weather as if he had just remembered an appointment, and was off to keep it.'

What an unapproachable stroke this last! Presently the disguised old gentleman, who has been asleep in the cart, is brought in, but under surveillance of Boxer; 'for that good dog, more thoughtful than his master, had, it seemed, been watching the old gentleman in his sleep lest he should walk off with a few

young poplar trees that were tied up behind the cart; and he still attended on him very closely, worrying his gaiters in fact, and making dead sets at his buttons.'

What geniality in every line is here, and thorough appreciation of that humour which in truth lurks in dogs' habits and movements, and which hitherto no one has thought of translating to the world! Then comes the famous journey to the picnic, and Boxer is of the party. 'Everybody knew him all along the road, especially the fowls and pigs, who, when they saw him approaching with his body all on one side, and his ears pricked up inquisitively, and that knob of a tail making the most of itself in the air, immediately withdrew into remote back settlements, without waiting for the honour of a nearer acquaintance. He had business everywhere, going down all the turnings, looking into all the wells, bolting in and out of all the cottages, dashing into the midst of all the dame schools, fluttering all the pigeons, magnifying the tails of all the cats, and trotting into the public-houses like a regular customer.'

Then he meets with the blind girl, and makes 'certain delicate distinctions of his own in his communications with her, which persuaded me fully that he knew her. He never sought to attract her attention by looking at her, as he often did with other people, but touched her invariably. What experience he could ever have had of blind people, or of blind dogs, I don't know. He had never lived with a blind master; nor had Mr. Boxer the elder, nor Mrs. Boxer, nor any of his respectable family on either side, ever been visited with blindness that I am aware of.'

That long, weary night for John Peerybingle follows. The mystery is then cleared up; the wrong made right; and the story closes riotously and in a tumult of happiness. Where was Boxer though? 'There wanted but one living creature to make the party complete; and in the twinkling of an eye, there he was; very thirsty with hard running, and engaged in hopeless en-

deavours to squeeze his head into a narrow pitcher. He had gone with the cart to its journey's end, very much disgusted with his master's absence, and stupendously rebellious to the deputy. After lingering about the stable for some little time, vainly attempting to incite the old horse to the mutinous act of returning on his own account, he had walked into the tap-room and laid himself down before the fire. But suddenly yielding to the conviction that the deputy was a humbug, and must be abandoned, he had got up again, turned tail, and come home.'

That is our last glimpse of famous Boxer. Sir Edwin, with skilful pencil, has shown us what he was like; but has made him a little too wicked and ferocious of aspect. Boxer was not a savage mastiff, but a smart, rough, brisk terrier, with a lively sense of the humorous bound up in his nature.

Room now for a dog of another order, one bred in drawing-rooms, and that figures briefly in a sort of short dream, in the life of one David Copperfield. He is but a spectral creature, and passes away along with that delicate fairy image of Doady Dora. That tiny abstraction flits by too swiftly, and in its shadow is seen the dim outline of Jip, the King Charles's dog, whose nature it is not to fancy strangers exceedingly. For Mr. Copperfield, on his first introduction to Dora, 'approached him tenderly, for I loved even him: but he showed his whole set of teeth, got under a chair expressly to snarl, and wouldn't hear of the least familiarity.' They walk together in the garden, Dora and Mr. Copperfield. 'He was mortally jealous of me, and persisted in barking at me. She took him up in her arms—oh, my goodness!—and caressed him, but he insisted upon barking still. He wouldn't let me touch him when I tried, and then she beat him. It increased my sufferings greatly to see the pats she gave him for punishment on the bridge of his blunt nose, while he winked his eyes, and licked her hand, and still growled within himself like a little double bass.' The poor youth is nearly

driven distracted by the tenderness with which the little quadruped is treated. 'Jip can protect me a great deal better than Miss Murdstone; can't you, Jip?' He only winked lazily, when she kissed his ball of a head. 'We find out our own friends,' continues my Dora, 'instead of having them found out for us; don't we, Jip?' Jip made a comfortable noise in answer, a little like a tea-kettle when it sings.

In the course of a later visit in this pretty history, Copperfield brings flowers as a present. 'Dora held my flowers to Jip to smell. Then Jip growled, and wouldn't smell them. Then Dora laughed, and held them a little closer to Jip to make him. Then Jip laid hold of

a bit of geranium with his teeth, and worried imaginary cats in it.' He comes again, to break that news of his being a beggar, so comically taken by little Dora: 'whose only association with the word was a yellow face and a night-cap, or a wooden leg, or a dog with a decanter stand in his mouth.' Jip has to be kissed, 'which operation she insisted should be performed symmetrically, on the centre of his nose.' Under the new economy he was still to 'have his mutton chop with his accustomed regularity.' The evening ends with her 'making Jip stand on his hind legs for toast, when she pretended to hold that nose of his against the hot teapot for punishment, because he wouldn't.' But

JIP.

through Jip's innocent agency all is discovered, Miss Murdstone capturing the letter. 'The little dog,' says that lady, 'retreated under the sofa, and was with great difficulty dislodged by the fire-irons. Even when dislodged, he still kept the letter in his mouth; and on my endeavouring to take it from him, at the imminent risk of being bitten, he kept it between his teeth so pertinaciously as to suffer himself to be suspended in the air by means of the document.' Jip is subsequently stolen, it is suspected 'by the man with the blue bag, and legs like balustrades of a bridge,' but is happily recovered, and found in a 'little house, tied up to a leg of the table.'

At a subsequent interview with those awful ladies, Miss Lavinia and Miss Clarissa, when proper regula-

tions for the meeting of the young lovers were arranged, sounds are heard as of Jip barking in the distance, and 'of being instantly choked.' At the close of which interview, 'I found my blessed darling stopping her ears against the door, and Jip in the plate warmer, with his head tied up in a towel.' Then she showed me Jip's new 'trick of standing on his hind legs in a corner, which he did for about the space of a flash of lightning, and then fell down.'

Then comes that suggestion of the Cookery Book, which is put to no other use than for Jip to beg on. Then comes that marriage (performed in that comical church of Phiz's own building), when Jip had wedding cake, and it did not agree with him. Then follows that exquisite detail of

housekeeping troubles and miscarriages, with that hopeless trying of little Doady to be industrious, and bringing forth of the account-book, over the items in which 'Jip would walk, wagging his tail, and smear them all out.' Then 'she would call Jip up to look at his misdeeds, which would occasion a diversion in Jip's favour, and some inking of his nose, perhaps, as a penalty. Then she would tell Jip to lie down on the table instantly, like a lion, which was one of his tricks, though I cannot say the likeness was striking, and if he were in an obedient humour, he would obey.'

Presently draws on that dark evening, which shall close over this little episode of the child-wife—foreshadowed dimly by the growing weakness of Jip.

He grows old — at which she wonders exceedingly; leaning out of her couch to look at him: 'He responded by standing on his hind legs, and baulking himself in various asthmatic attempts to scramble up by the head and shoulders.' 'Dora made him lie down by her, and when he was quiet drew one of his long ears through and through her hand, repeating, thoughtfully, "Even little Jip! Oh, poor fellow!"'

Then the end approaches, and the little image begins to fade out. Little Doady can walk about no more. 'He is, as it were suddenly, grown very old. It may be that he misses his mistress—something that enlivened him, and made him younger; but he mopes, and his sight is weak, and his limbs are feeble, and my aunt is sorry that he objects to her no more; but creeps nearer as he lies on Dora's bed, and mildly licks her hand.'

In a few minutes more it has grown to be quite dark. And, first, Jip passes away. 'His Chinese house is by the fire; and he lies within it on his bed of flannel, querulously trying to sleep. . . .'

The night wears on; 'more restless than he was, he crawls out of his house, and looks at me, and wanders to the door, and whines to go up stairs. "Not to-night, Jip; not to-night." He comes very

slowly back to me, licks my hand, and lifts his dim eyes to my face. "O Jip! it may be, never again!" He lies down at my feet, stretches himself out as if to sleep, and with a plaintive cry is dead.'

The exquisite working of these pictures, and the truth and pathos that lie in every line prove, not indeed the master in his art, for that has been proved over and over again, but the marvellous fidelity and accuracy of his observation.

With the yellow lights hanging overhead, in extemporized hoops, and ravished village throngs, contemplating those fairy scenes in the circle, which include specially the daring equestrian Act on a bare-backed steed of Mr. E. W. B. Childers; with Mr. Meriman lavishly distributing his exquisite Shakspearian quips and repartees; and the gentleman in the black evening suit, walking round and round on his eternal beat, inspiring the flagging pace of bare-backed and draperied chargers; makes entry also that famous member of the company—the highly-trained performing dog Merrylegs! He is but a sketch in this cabinet series; being, so to speak, merely hinted at, without coming on distinctly. And yet he lives (and dies); and we know him perfectly. His marks and tokens are unmistakeable. He was, likely enough, a French poodle.

Signor Jupe, his master, Sissy tells, 'was angry only one night, and that was not to me, but Merrylegs. Merrylegs (she whispered the awful fact) is his performing dog. . . . Father, soon after Uny came home from performing, told Merrylegs to jump upon the backs of the two chairs, and stand across them, which is one of his tricks. He looked at father, and didn't do it at once. Everything of father's had gone wrong that night, and he didn't please the public at all. . . . Then he beat the dog, and I was frightened, and said, "Father, father! Pray don't hurt the creature who is so fond of you! Oh, heaven forgive you! father, stop!" and he stopped, and the dog was bloody; and father lay down, crying, on the floor, with

the dog in his arms, and the dog licked his face."

Merrylegs is thenceforth lost sight of, and does not reappear for a long interval—not until the close of the story. Then Mr Sleary briefly tells his history, prefacing it with some admirable observations on the character of the tribe.

"I'm bletht if I know what to call it; but I have had dogth find me, thquire, in a way that made me think whether that dog hadn't gone to another dog, and thed, 'You don't happen to know a perthon of the name of Thlcary, in the horthe riding way—thout man—game eye?' and whether that dog mightn't have

thed, 'Well, I can't thay I know him mythelf; but I know a dog that I think would be likely to be acquainted with him.' And whether that dog mightn't have thought it over, and thed, 'Theary, Theary! O yeth, to be thure! a friend of mine mentioned him to me at one time. I can get you hith addreth.' In conthequenth of my being afore the public, and going about there mutht, you thee, there mutht be a number of dogth acquainted with me, thquire, that I don't know. . . . Any way, ith fourteen month ago, thquire, thinthe we wath at Cheth-ter. We wath getting up our Children in the Wood, one morning,

MERRYLEGS.

when there cometh into our ring, by the thtage door, a dog. He had travelled a long way; he wath in very bad condition; he wath lame and pretty well blind. He went round to our children one after the other, as if he wath theeking for a child he knowd; and then he come to me, and throwd hithelf up behind, and thood on hith two forelegs weak ath he wath; and then he wagged hith tail, and died. Thquire, that dog wath Merrylegth.'

In the weary pilgrimage of little Nell and her grandfather, they too come across other wonderful per-

forming dogs—fellows of infinite humour—and who are described with a zest and quaintness infinitely diverting. Steps are heard outside the 'Jolly Sandboys,' just as that most appetizing stew, which has been simmering on the fire, is ready for being served; and fresh company enters.

'These were no other than four very dismal dogs, who came patter-ing in one after the other, headed by an old bandy dog of particularly mournful aspect, who, stopping when the last of his followers had got as far as the door, erected himself upon his hind legs, and looked

round at his companions, who immediately stood upon their hind legs in a grave and melancholy row. Nor was this the only remarkable circumstance about these dogs; for each of them wore a kind of little coat of some gaudy colour, trimmed with tarnished spangles, and one of them had a cap upon his head, tied very carefully under his chin, which had fallen down upon his nose, and completely obscured one eye; add to this, that the gaudy coats were all wet through and discoloured with rain, and that the wearers were splashed and dirty, and some idea may be formed of the unusual ap-

pearance of these new visitors to the "Jolly Sandboys."

'Neither Short, nor the landlord, nor Thomas Codlin, however, were the least surprised, merely remarking that these were Jerry's dogs, and that Jerry could not be far behind. So there the dogs stood, patiently winking and gaping, and looking extremely hard at the boiling pot, until Jerry himself appeared, when they all dropped down at once, and walked about the room in their natural manner. This posture, it must be confessed, did not much improve their appearance, as their own personal tails, and their coat

THE DUNAL FOUR.

tails—both capital things in their way—did not agree together.'

'This was addressed to the dog with the cap on, who, being a new member of the company, and not quite certain of his duty, kept his unobscured eye anxiously on his master, and was perpetually starting upon his hind legs when there was no occasion, and falling down again.'

'However, he did nothing of the kind, but instead thereof assisted a stout servant girl in turning the contents of the caldron into a large tureen; a proceeding which the dogs, proof against various hot splashes which fell upon their noses, watched with terrible eagerness. At length the dish was lifted on the

table, and mugs of ale having been previously set round, little Neil ventured to say grace, and supper began.

'At this juncture the poor dogs were standing on their hind legs quite surprisingly; the child, having pity on them, was about to cast some morsels of food to them, before she tasted it herself, hungry though she was, when their master interposed. "No, my dear, no; not an atom from anybody's hand but mine, if you please. That dog," said Jerry, pointing out the old leader of the troop, and speaking in a terrible voice, "lost a halfpenny to-day. He goes without his supper."

'The unfortunate creature dropped upon his forelegs directly, wagged his tail, and looked imploringly at

his master. "You must be more careful, sir," said Jerry, walking coolly to the chair where he had placed the organ, and setting the stop. "Come here! Now, sir, you play away at that, while we have supper, and leave off, if you dare!" The dog immediately began to grind most mournful music. His master, having shown him the whip, resumed his seat, and called up the others, who, at his direction, formed in a row, standing upright like a file of soldiers. "Now, gentlemen," said Jerry, looking at them attentively. "The dog whose name 's called Cato. The dogs whose names ain't called, keep quiet; Carlo!" The lucky individual whose name was called, snapped up the morsel thrown towards him, but none of the others moved a muscle. In this manner they were fed at the discretion of their master. Meanwhile the dog in disgrace ground hard at the organ, sometimes in quick time, sometimes in slow; but never leaving off for an instant. When the knives and forks rattled very much, or any of his fellows got an unusually large piece of fat, he accompanied the music with a short howl; but he immediately checked himself, on his master looking round, and applied himself with increased diligence to the Old Hundredth.'

What playfulness and gentle trifling is here! Should the poor trained poodle have ever got on Mr. Dickens's table, and tumbled the ink bottle on newly-written pages, for which the world was waiting—just as Sir Isaac Newton's little dog Diamond treated certain precious calculations—we might swear he would take the misfortune as gently as did the great astronomer.

When Hugh, in the story of 'Barnaby Rudge,' is led to execution, a hint is given of a dog—no more than a bare hint—which is yet introduced with such art as to raise some sympathy for the wild ruffian who is being brought to execution. A man with a corner in his heart for a poor brute who has been faithful to him, is not wholly unredeemed. 'Unless,' said Hugh, glancing hurriedly back, 'unless any person here has a fancy

for a dog, and not then unless he means to use him well. There's one belonging to me at the house I came from, and it wouldn't be easy to find a better. *He'll whine at first, but he'll soon get over that.*'

Thus is skilfully suggested the image of some living creature.

With the memory of that child for whom it was said half the empire mourned—was there ever such a compliment paid to novelist?—he has bound up the affection of a dog—'a great, hoarse, shaggy dog, chained up at the back of the house'—whose roughness becomes softened before the influence of little Paul. Going away after that wonderful party at Doctor Blimber's, and seeing the Toots', and Cornelias, and Feeders, and the whole company of schoolboy faces clustered round him in the hall, he thinks of his four-footed friend, 'Ask them,' he says to the Doctor, 'to take care of Diogenes, if you please.' Diogenes was the dog who had never in his 'life received a friend into his confidence before Paul.'

Then after little Dombey had heard what the wild waves were saying, and drifted away out of the world, came that well-meant visit of condolence to Florence, by the faithful Toots, who brought with him what was really a delicate offering. "He ain't a lady's dog, you know, but you won't mind that, will you?" In fact, Diogenes was at that moment staring through the window of a hackney cabriolet into which, for conveyance to that spot, he had been ensnared *on a false pretence of rats among the straw* He gave short yelps out of one side of his mouth, and overbalancing himself by the intensity of every one of those efforts, tumbled down into the straw, and then sprung panting up again, putting out his tongue as if he had come express to a dispensary to be examined for his health.' This, too, was a dog 'continually acting on a wrong idea that there was an enemy in the neighbourhood *whom it was meritorious to bark at.*' Not surprising either, that when he came bounding into the room that he 'dived under all the furniture, and wound a long iron chain that dangled from

his neck round legs of chairs and
tables, and then tugged at it until his
eyes became unnaturally visible.'

After this is it wonderful that we
should apply the term *The Landseer*
of Fiction to our famous novelist?

A JULY LYRIC.

N'EST-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant to lounge on the deck,
And watch the foam-bells as the mainsail they fleck,
Or count the blue wavelets which ripple fast by,
As the 'Undine' speeds swift in the breeze of July?

N'est-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant to share in the fun
Of a picnic in forest glades when the fierce sun
Shines down on the sparkling Moselle—pigeon-pie,
And—flirtations, through all the thick leaves of July?

N'est-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant to take up your stand
On the emerald velvet lawn, mallet in hand
With a demoiselle *piquant* and teasing, just by,
To teach you how croquet is played in July?

N'est-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant to drink in the breeze
Which the early morn brings through the low waving trees,
By the side of the swift stream where floats your bright fly,
And a three-pounder takes—spite the heat of July?

N'est-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant when sunk to his rest
Is the sun in the gorgeous cloud-land of the west,
To have a quadrille on the lawn where the eye
Of a *chaperone* cold doesn't chill fair July?

N'est-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant to stand by the side
Of a beauty toxophilite prompt to deride
Your teaching and stringing, if crookedly fly
Her arrows, just turned by the breeze of July?

N'est-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant with slack curb and rein
To ride in sweet converse through parkland and lane,
When each curl of the lip and soft gleam of the eye
Neath the plumed hat add zest to the joys of July?

N'est-ce pas tout-à-fait charmant to drift on the stream
Through the lilies and reed-beds, as if in a dream,
With a voice softly speaking whose music may vie
With the low-breathing tone of the wind of July?

W. R.

LODGERS IN THE SUBURBS.

A WAY from the rich heart of the City; beyond the miles upon miles of busy, well-filled shops; beyond the acres upon acres covered with luxurious mansions; far out on the weedy borders of the great town—where town acquires a sterile, country aspect, and country retaliates by putting on the squalid look of town, resigned in a dreary, hopeless way to its defeat in the battle with bricks and mortar—does Todman Terrace or Pitman Place stretch its monstrous length of obtrusively genteel tenements. Its lath-and-plaster complexion promises the honourable profession of architects an early opportunity of exercising its skill anew upon the same site. The door-steps are ghastly white, the bell-handles defyingly bright, and the muslin curtains of the parlour windows suggest in their folds a general idea of drifted snow. Too often, on exploring the inside, the outside and front are found to have monopolized more than their proportion of the fluid devoted to household lustration. Without needing to glance at the little white ticket which here and there lurks modestly in the corner of a window-pane, the experienced eye does not fail to perceive that it has arrived at one of the head-quarters of lodgers in the suburbs.

The worthy couples, or, as it is in many cases, the lone females who rent and furnish these tenements, however much they differ in other points, have almost invariably one feature in common,—they all belong to the numerous family of those who ‘have had losses.’ Failures in trade, victims of extravagant families or designing friends, of unforeseen and inevitable reverses—one way or other they are ‘down-comers,’ who have barely succeeded in rescuing the small stock of upholstery which furnishes the two small parlours and half-dozen ditto bedrooms from the wreck when their worldly possessions went by the board. With this as stock in trade they have entered upon a new

line, which consists in taking in and doing for—not necessarily in the invidious sense—a number of individuals whose small means or precarious position forbid their establishing independent homes of their own. These comprise poor artists; singers; musicians; authors, who, in the days when Grub Street was in existence, would have been found in that classic locality; teachers; clerks; and single females without friends and with very small annuities. Such constitute what may be called the stationary population. But there is, further, a shifting population of persons who stay a week, fortnight, or month, seldom longer, and then depart, and the neighbourhood knows them no more.

These are the ‘Lodgers in the Suburbs,’ of whom it is our more immediate purpose to speak. They are generally persons who have ‘a difficulty;’ whom convenience, or a desire to weather out some troublesome phase in their existence away from the eyes of their world brings into temporary seclusion. A couple, of whom the husband has a cause on in one of the courts at Westminster, come up from the country, timid of townspeople, and thoroughly uncomfortable in its ways, stay a fortnight or three weeks, and then depart—bustling and jubilant if the decision has been in their favour, or subdued and moodily revolving consequences under a reverse. Or it is a bankrupt, who daily betakes himself to the neighbourhood of Basinghall Street to pore over those hopeless volumes which, balance one side against the other as often as he may, yield but one invariable result, ruin, ruin, ruin. By-and-by he has his final hearing, and departs to his family sore in heart and wounded in self-respect by remarks he has had to listen to from opposing counsel—with his certificate, maybe, still three, six, or twelve months in the distance. Now and then, but more rarely than the foregoing, the new comer appears to be a man who is

'wanted' by the police. That fact may be guessed by the persistency with which he keeps his room during the day, going abroad only after dark, and then never without a furtive glance around on leaving and returning to see if he is watched. His apprehensions effectually prevent his becoming one of the stationary population. Sometimes it is a couple of whom it is no breach of charity to conclude the female has a 'protector' without the legal claim to the title—a runaway wife, or the travelling companion of an absconded husband.

Such are samples of the temporary tenants whom the back parlours and upper floor bedrooms of a neighbourhood of suburban lodgers hold in hiding. Generally they come and depart without attracting observation, except from their landladies, whom experience teaches to keep a sharp eye on the one carpet bag which ordinarily constitutes the luggage, especially at that period when the week's lodging money becomes due. They go, and carry their mystery with them to some other neighbourhood. But occasionally an incident comes to light which manifestly forms one link in an undeveloped romance, and supplies a subject for a few days' gossiping conjecture. Two or three experiences of one house may stand for all.

Some few years have passed since a Mr. Johnson, or Jones—one name will do as well as the other, since it is a remarkable fact connected with this class of lodgers in the suburbs that they invariably belong to one or other of those families whose appellatives can scarcely be held distinctions—a Mr. Johnson engaged a room, and entered on possession with the customary stock of luggage—the one carpet bag. The new arrival was a well-dressed, slim young man, of perhaps two or three and twenty, and, as his habits soon showed, of very shy and retiring disposition. He seldom left the house, and when casually met on the stairs or seen in his room by the servant in attendance, invariably wore his hat, a broad-brimmed wideawake, pulled low down over the face. He

was abstemious, and gave but little trouble in errands to the public-house, in which particular he was a marked exception to the general run of lodgers in the suburbs. For nearly a month the quiet lodger earned his landlady's praises for his little-trouble-giving habits, when suddenly one evening towards dusk she was summoned to his room to receive the rent due to the end of the unexpired week, bidden good-bye, and Mr. Johnson was gone.

His mode of departure was too consonant with the ordinary habits of the class to have excited much observation, but for what followed. Early on the morning following Mr. Johnson's departure a well-dressed man of middle age, accompanied by a police-sergeant, came to the house, and made such inquiries as identified the object of them with the departed lodger. From remarks that escaped them it appeared that Mr. Johnson was *Mrs.* — (the name did not transpire), a young lady of respectable position, who, having been forced into a marriage against her will, seized the opportunity afforded by some bustle in the course of the bridal festivities to disappear from the scene, and leave bridegroom, friends, and wedding guests to as hopeless a search as did the bride in 'The Mistletoe Bough.' From that day the luckless husband obtained no clue to the runaway till the one which brought him hither in search of her—just too late. How the object of the search got information of the intended visit, or whether she merely obeyed one of those instinctive impulses which sometimes enable us to evade unseen danger, were mysteries the neighbourhood never solved. Equally in the dark is it as to whether the husband succeeded in overtaking the fugitive or *Mr. Johnson* still occupies lodgings in the suburbs.

Even the proverbial indifference of London lodgers to their fellow-occupants under the same roof was not proof against an accession which came in the person of a lad of twelve or thirteen, who engaged a bedroom, and soon settled down into the desultory habits of lodgers without occu-

pation. He was evidently not town-bred, and his diffidence and want of self-possession equally told that he had not been long from the country. An indefinable scared look indicated the runaway; but whether from friends or from justice his countenance afforded no clue. About a fortnight had passed, when one morning a man, who from his appearance might have been a tradesman in a country town, accompanied by a widow of some forty years of age, came to the door. After a lengthened conference with the land-

lady, the party was shown unannounced into the room in the boy-lodger's occupation. An alarmed exclamation of 'Mother!' followed by sobs from the female, was all that was heard ere the door closed upon them. More than an hour went over, when the landlady was summoned to have her claims discharged, and the two visitors left, taking the lad with them. Whatever had been the delinquency, there was forgiveness and restoration in the aspect of the group as they bore off, shame-faced, yet relieved, the

youngest of our lodgers in the suburbs.

Sometimes the mode of disappearance suggests suspicions of a dark fate having overtaken the missing party, whose unclaimed personal effects remain the sole evidences of a mystery never to be unravelled on this side of time.

In the fifth or sixth week of his tenancy disappeared a young man of gentlemanly demeanour who had engaged the best accommodation available in the house. He had no lack of means—at least nothing about him betrayed that painful anxiety in pecuniary matters which is characteristic of the class gene-

rally. Nor did he avoid publicity, or seem to dread pursuit. Yet he was restless in all his movements, starting at trifles, and seemingly passed whole nights without rest. A physician might have detected symptoms of brain fever in all this, while one more learned in the human heart might have read evidence of a subtler disease. It was almost a relief to those under the same roof to learn that Mr. — had been absent some days, although he had left no intimation nor taken any portion of his apparel with him. After a lapse of three months his portmanteau was opened. No address was found in it: nothing to afford a clue to his history except a correspondence in a female hand, but without place, date, or signature.

It showed the writer to have run through all the phases of coquetry: she had been devoted, cool, utterly careless of the feelings of her victim, even to the declaration of her preference for another. Besides this heartless record there was a miniature of a fair-haired, blue-eyed girl, and a tress of that fair hair tied with blue ribbon. That was the sole clue to the fate of the missing man that ever turned up. Perhaps the dark under-current of the Thames, where it eddies round the piers of some of the bridges, might have revealed something more.

But the reader may consider this a sufficient specimen of the ragged fringe to the parti-coloured mantle of London Society.

AMONG THE POWDER.

‘METHEGLIN POWDER MILLS,
June 20th, 1863.

‘AND why don’t you pay us your promised visit? You need not be frightened at the ominous sound of a Powder Mill. There is not the least danger, or your humble servant would know better than to take up his residence here. Let me tell you that your only chance to escape being “blown up” is to come here without delay. I shall be visiting town next Tuesday, and mean to take you back with me on the Wednesday; so fail at your peril.’

Such an appeal was irresistible, and parrying the remonstrances of sorrowing relatives, to whose feminine sensibilities the name of gunpowder was a dismay, and the distant view of a rifle in a shop-window a very Gorgon’s head of terror, we submitted ourselves to the tempter, and, after a journey of some few hours, entered the chaise which was to conduct us to the dread precincts.

We had perused more than one account of powder manufactories. We had heard of dismal, blasted heaths, black and withered as by the fiery storm of the desert, of stunted vegetation, and trees shattered to splinters by repeated explosions. We had read narratives, picturesque and appalling as the wondrous paintings of Brûgel himself, telling of the blackened, grim, and resolute visages worn by the workmen who were bold enough to peril their lives for fabulous wages; of the awful silence broken only by hoarse whispers, and of the canals into which every one has orders to jump if any one should happen to shout.

With a mind stored with such associations it is not surprising that, when the gate was swung open which led to the mills, we cast one anxious glance at the wheels of the carriage in hopes that they might be bound with copper, or at least that the horse’s hoofs might be shod with some such metal, so that a stray spark might not disperse our

component parts to the four winds of heaven. As if, however, to mock the little nervousness which crept over us, the horse dashed off at his best speed, incited by the prospect of his wonted stable, shaking his harness till it rattled like a dancer’s castanets, and in a few minutes we had dismounted with a hearty welcome to the Metheglin Powder Mills.

We looked around in bewildered astonishment. Where were the mills? Where were the scorched plain, the shattered trees and the withered herbage, the silence as of death, and the sombre looks of the residents? A fair and smiling landscape met our view; a heather-clad hill rose purple in the background; a clear little stream rushed cheerily over its pebbly bed; on our left a field of waving corn rippled in the breeze; a fruitful orchard nodded on our right; while swathes of newly-made hay perfumed the air; and in front of the house a number of labourers were busily loading a cart with the fragrant harvest. We may mention casually that the horse attached to the above-mentioned cart suddenly turned obstinate, and flatly declined to ascend the hill leading to the farm-yard; but, thanks to our friend Mr. Rarey’s instructions, was reduced to speedy obedience under the very shadow of the mill.

But where is the mill? A light cloud of white fleecy vapour, evidently emitted from a steam-engine, was stealing through the trees, and on walking a few steps in its direction we discovered a row of small, quaint-looking buildings, formed of strong buttressed brick at the ends, and the sides and roof simply made of slight boards. The door of one building stood open; something black, huge, and mysterious rolled slowly in the gloom of its interior; and just outside the door sat two figures, the one a grimy man with a big hay-coloured beard, and the other a woman in a red shawl, and a bonnet cocked perpendicularly on

her head after the fashion of rural maidens and bathing-women. Both were busily occupied in discussing bread and meat, with occasional reference to an enormous jug. This was the mill, and these were a workman and his wife, who seemed to have preferred eating their dinner in the most advantageous position for being blown to atoms should the mill explode.

We have been told, on very excellent authority, that when M. Blondin retires into plain clothes and private life, he is not in the habit of taking his meals on a rope stretched a mile or so from the ground; but since we visited that mill, we have seriously doubted the assertion. Perhaps the man was so used to being blown up that he had come to look upon such an adventure merely as a pleasing excitement. The last time that he had undergone that experience, he and the wall were projected to a considerable distance, the wall was shattered to atoms, and he lost the best part of his beard.

The remainder of the buildings required in the manufacture of gunpowder were disposed along the brook, care being taken to separate the dangerous houses as far as possible from each other, the stove, or house wherein the powder is finally dried before packing, being placed at the farthest extremity of the grounds. Familiarity does truly breed contempt, at all events, of danger; for whereas, on our first arrival, we were cautiously chary of passing near the stove, we soon regarded it with supreme indifference, and were accustomed to take our matutinal bath in the stream that washed its walls, having, with the aid of an experienced engineer, built a dam for the purpose of deepening its waters.

We resided in that mill for about ten days and never spent a pleasanter time. Still, after our return, on looking again into the paper which contained the dismal accounts of such places, and finding that they all agreed, whether written by masculine or feminine pens, in depicting them in the most sombre hues, we came to the conclusion that our mill must have been a very paragon

among mills, a *rara avis* like the white swan which recently caused such consternation in Australia. Perhaps, too, the small scale on which these mills were constructed might have something to do with the discrepancy between the reality and the imagination. We therefore solicited and obtained permission to visit one of the largest gunpowder manufactories of this country, and by the kindness of Messrs. Hall were conducted throughout the whole of their establishment at Faversham.

Strange to say, the impression left by this manufactory was even more pleasing than in the former instance, the scenery being more picturesque, the foliage more luxuriant, and the flowers more plentiful. Not the least sign of desolation met the eye, which was everywhere attracted by the varied greens of trees and shrubs, and the bright flowers that bloomed in every direction; while the birds sang merrily on the branches, and no idea of danger seemed to influence the five hundred workmen who were plying their tasks in their different vocations. As if in defiance of popular prejudice, the dwelling-house is placed in close proximity to a row of mills, thus showing the entire confidence reposed by the proprietor in the security of the works.

What these works are shall now be seen as the reader accompanies us in our progress through them.

Every one knows that gunpowder is composed of three ingredients—saltpetre, charcoal, and sulphur—and that the value of the powder lies in the proper handling of these substances. We will take them in their order, and after watching the processes by which they are prepared for use, will follow them through the mills until they emerge in their perfected state as gunpowder.

The chief ingredient in powder is the 'villanous saltpetre,' which occupies about seventy-five per cent. of the parts necessary to form gunpowder. It must be understood, however, that the proportions vary slightly in the several kinds of powder, and that different nations

employ different proportions. Still, the average compositions may be given as containing seventy-five parts of saltpetre, fifteen of charcoal, and ten of sulphur. As, therefore, the saltpetre occupies the most prominent place, we will take that substance first in order.

Entering a large shed, we find ourselves slightly bewildered by strange objects and ceaseless motion, and are forced to wait a while until we have accustomed our eyes to the unwonted sights, and have begun to analyze the apparent confusion which reigns around. Great heaps of dirty and uneven crystals are piled in corners; mounds of apparent snow are gathered into huge wooden vessels; a body of bricklayers are busily engaged in building some complicated masonry around a caldron that looks like a pantomimic giant's wideawake hat made of copper; several bare-armed, sturdy workmen are diligently stirring the liquid contents of large shallow vats; others are tending the fires that heat the contents of several great caldrons, companions to the copper wideawake already mentioned; others are passing from spot to spot, casting inquisitive glances at the progress of the works; while at the farther end of the building a bevy of women are mightily busy at some mysterious work, their elbows flying like lambs' tails, and their tongues scarcely less industrious. As if to add to the bewilderment of the uninitiated spectator, the whole building is crossed and recrossed with pipes, beams, straps, and gutters, so that the unwary observer is tolerably sure to trip over some metal pipe, to knock his head against some unexpected beam, or, if he escapes these dangers, to tumble into a great vat of unpleasant-looking, steaming liquid that yawns to receive him into its hot bosom.

This is the house wherein the saltpetre, or 'Peter,' as it is familiarly termed for the sake of brevity, is prepared for its incorporation with the other two ingredients.

When first 'digged out of the bowels of the harmless earth,' the saltpetre is quite useless for the powder-manufacturer's purpose, not

only being mixed with fragments of earth and other foreign substances, but bearing within itself several salts which would seriously injure its efficiency.

The 'grough peter,' as the substance is termed before being purified, is composed of moderately large crystals, averaging half an inch in length, and evidently very impure. The first process is to place it in one of the large caldrons together with a certain amount of distilled water, and then to boil it until the saltpetre is thoroughly dissolved. A tap is then turned, which permits the hot fluid to pour out of the caldron into a great canvas strainer through which it passes, leaving behind all the mechanical impurities, such as earth, fragments of wood, &c. It is then suffered to pour into a large shallow pan only a foot or so in depth, where a large admixture of common salt, otherwise called muriate of soda, is separated, and suffered to flow away through tubes.

After evaporation has partially taken place, long crystals are seen to shoot through the liquid like the frost foliage on window-panes, and are immediately broken up by constant stirring with great wooden rakes armed with copper teeth. The result is that the saltpetre, unable to form large crystals, is perforce obliged to make little ones, almost microscopical in their minuteness, not larger, indeed, than those of snow. In former times the purified saltpetre was suffered to form itself into large crystals, which were afterwards ground into powder. But the present improved plan possesses two great advantages, the one being that the water, which is always mechanically contained between the layers of a large crystal, can find no place in those of minute size; and the other, that no grinding is necessary, and all the expense of mills and engines is saved, together with the time that was consumed in working them.

The purified saltpetre is beautiful to look at, white and glittering as newly-fallen snow, and when rubbed between the fingers, yields to the pressure with the same peculiar

crepitation that is found in snow on a very frosty day. The reader must remember that in the few pages that can be devoted to the entire subject, it is impossible, as well as unnecessary, to narrate every detail, and that we can only give the salient points of each process in the manufacture. Without, therefore, describing the various minutiae of the work, we proceed to mention that, when the fluid has been sufficiently stirred, the saltpetre is raked together, removed by means of wooden shovels, and thrown on a sloping board, where it is allowed to remain until it has drained itself nearly dry, and is then put into the vessel where it awaits the men who carry it away. Copper-lined wheelbarrows are used for this purpose, as wood is speedily eaten away by the action of the nitre; and when the snowy substance has reached its destination, it is thrown into great bins that, but for their whiteness, would conjure up pleasing associations of long-stored port. Here it undergoes a final drainage, and is then ready for the mixing machine.

Taking a temporary leave of the saltpetre, we turn our attention to the charcoal.

The woods used for this purpose require careful selection, the harder kinds being quite useless to the powder manufacturer, and only a few of the softer woods being now accepted. Dogwood is used for the best sporting gunpowder, alder and willow being employed for Government and blasting powders.

The first process in converting the wood into charcoal is to remove the bark, which, if suffered to remain, would ruin the powder, and cause it to throw out sparks like a firework. It is then seasoned by being stacked in the open air, so that the wind can pass freely between the sticks. It requires at least two years of seasoning before it is fit for use, and is better if it can remain unused for double the time.

Wood from which this charcoal is to be made is always cut in the spring while the sap is up, so that the bark may be the more easily removed. Dogwood is generally cut every five or six years, the willow

every six or seven years, and the alder is permitted to grow for ten years before it is cut. It is always arranged so as to be as nearly as possible of the same dimensions, in order to obtain uniform results in the charring. The dogwood, being small, is piled entire, as are the smaller sticks of alder and willow, but the larger pieces are split longitudinally, so as to expedite the process of seasoning. The amount of wood required for this purpose is almost incredible. Whole acres of ground are covered with the wood, which is piled in heaps nearly a hundred yards in length, six feet wide, and eight or nine high, drawn up in regular order like the ranks of a regiment, and having just sufficient interval between them to permit the passage of the workmen. One is quite lost in wonder at the apparently exhaustless stores which are exhibited to the view, and is almost disposed to side with a distinguished foreigner who believed that the wood was used as fuel for the furnaces.

Taking some of the seasoned wood, we proceed to the place where it is converted into charcoal. This process is accomplished by distillation, the wood being no longer burned in heaps, covered with earth, according to the old, wasteful, and imperfect custom.

The building which we now enter might, from its appearance and all-pervading blackness, be the rendezvous of all the chimney-sweeps in the land. Everything is black: a stamp on the ground raises a cloud of soft, black dust, and by the time the visitor leaves its walls his face has assumed a fine grey hue, diversified by a few black patches.

In the centre of the building is seen a large square solid edifice of brick, having a row of circular iron plates or doors. These are the doors leading to the cylinders or retorts, as they are called, in which the wood is charred. Opposite each retort stands an iron framework mounted on wheels, bearing on its top a great iron cylinder lying horizontally on revolving rollers. A man, who, we are informed, is an active gunner in the volunteer artillery corps, but

who from all appearance has passed his life up a chimney, now comes forward, and unfolds the whole mystery of charcoal-making.

The cylinder is filled with the wood, and the mouth closed. The man then pushes the whole frame up to the mouth of its particular retort, opens the circular door, exhibiting a fiery cavity such as the pencil of Retch has depicted in his 'Fridolin,' pushes the iron cylinder into the retort, and closes the door. The whole process irresistibly reminds the observer of loading a Whitworth cannon, the retort answering to the bore of the gun, the cylinder taking the place of the cartridge, and the iron door representing the moveable breech. The various gases which are evolved escape from the cylinder through a hole at the end, and pass into a tube which forces them through the fire below, so that the wood is actually made to assist in its own incrimination, and a large amount of fuel is saved.

After the wood has been sufficiently charred, a process which occupies between three and four hours, the iron doors are reopened; the cylinder is withdrawn by iron hooks, is run again upon its stand, and conveyed to another part of the room. Away goes the sable manager, and in a few moments is heard a deafening rattle and clangour like the artificial thunder in a theatrical tempest. The cause of this horrible discordance is soon visible in the shape of a cylindrical iron barrel termed a 'cooler,' which is being rolled along over the hard ground. Into this vessel the charcoal is raked, and therein is shut up from the air until cool. Were the air suffered to gain admission to the charcoal, the whole mass would soon burn away, and reduce itself to a white ash, and therefore the coolers are made in such a manner that the air is thoroughly excluded. To show the necessity for the precaution, the lid of a cooler was removed. As we looked into its black recesses, a dull red speck grew slowly out of the darkness, spread, brightened, and in a few minutes the centre of the charcoal was a mass of glowing

fire. The cooling process occupies several hours, and when quite completed the charcoal is stacked away in the store-houses.

Charcoal when thus prepared is wondrously light, very brittle, giving way with a sharp snap, and presents the original grain of the wood in a perfect manner. In some sticks of dogwood charcoal now before us, the rings formed by the annual growth of the wood are clear and well defined; the broken wood-cells are visible by the aid of a magnifying-glass, and even the large pith-cells in the centre retain their wonted forms.

The next process with the charcoal is the grinding. This is accomplished in a machine that exactly resembles a magnified coffee-mill, and that rapidly reduces the brittle material to a powder so fine that the least breath drives it up in clouds. After it has been strongly pulverized and sifted, it is removed to a room adjoining the spot where the saltpetre has been deposited; and the two ingredients await in separate apartments the arrival of the third substance, without which they could not be combined.

The sulphur is mostly obtained from Sicily, where it is deposited by volcanic action, and, like the saltpetre, is sent to this country in a very impure state. As in the former case, the unpurified sulphur is termed 'grough' brimstone, the hard *g* being apparently a guttural addition to the word 'rough,' which has been handed down to successive generations. Grough sulphur is in small lumps about the size of a common pea, but with tolerably sharp angles, and of very irregular form. Its colour is dingy yellow, with here and there a dash of brown or even a tinge of green. The process of purification is rather complicated, and would need the aid of illustrations to be thoroughly explained; but its principal points may be described as follows.

The grough sulphur is placed in a caldron, similar to that which is employed for dissolving the saltpetre, and a large portion of the impurities removed by skimming. When sufficiently melted, it is allowed to flow

through a tube into moulds sunk in the ground. Each mould is filled to the top, and a piece of iron hooping is then bent nearly double, and the two ends pushed deeply into the soft substance, thus forming a handle by which it may be removed when cool and hard. Being left undisturbed in these moulds, a considerable amount of impurity sinks to the bottom, where it forms a layer of a darkish gray colour, some two or three inches in thickness. After the sulphur is cool, it is drawn out of the mould in a solid mass, and the dark sediment is chopped off with a hatchet.

When the last particle of pure sulphur obtainable by these means has been procured from the mass, and the little that remains would not repay the trouble of extracting it, the residue is laid aside and sold to the vitriol-makers. In this state it is called 'sulphur vivum,' and looks extremely like gray limestone. On breaking it, however, a slight scattering of minute sulphur particles is seen entangled in the mass, and can be rubbed off by the finger.

The sediment is returned to the ground, to undergo the same process again; and the partially purified sulphur is now passed on to another ingenious but complicated apparatus, where it undergoes the last process of cleansing, and is melted down in readiness to be poured into moulds. The attendant tests its state by plunging a metal rod into the semi-liquid mass; and it is most curious to see the melted sulphur cling to the rod like treacle, and creep slowly down until it drops off in tenacious strings. In this state it is of a lovely amber colour, often deepening towards carmine; and the gradual change from translucent red to opaque yellow is very curious. When, at last, the fastidious eye of the manager is satisfied, the purified sulphur is allowed to flow into earthenware moulds bound with iron, and, when cool, is turned out, and laid aside for use. In this stage of its progress, the sulphur is shaped very like a sugarloaf, and the skittle-like aspect presented by nine or ten of these 'loaves,' as they are ranged on the floor, causes an almost irre-

sistible longing to take up a good heavy ball and knock them over.

When broken up, the sulphur is really beautiful. Its colour is the clearest and softest yellow, and the glittering crystalline structure has the lustrous gloss and sparkle of pure spermaceti. Each loaf — if we may so call them — is now knocked to pieces, and then carefully ground in a mill until reduced to almost impalpable powder. As the mill employed for this purpose is almost identical with those that will presently be described, we shall only mention that, like the saltpetre and charcoal, the sulphur is now taken to the mixing-house.

Up to the present time, the various processes have been sufficiently innocent; but with the mixing commences a slight danger. After the various proportions of saltpetre, charcoal, and sulphur have been carefully weighed, they are taken to the mixing-machine, and placed in the hopper. This machine consists essentially of a large box, in which revolves a double set of large copper-toothed combs. The ingredients, being placed in the hopper, and the machine set in rapid motion, fall from the hopper into the square box, and in their passage are met by the combs, which dash the particles about as if hurled by a whirlwind, and before they can pass into the receiver have mixed them most effectually. Some such machine is absolutely necessary for the mixing, as the very different specific gravities of the ingredients would otherwise keep the charcoal at the surface, while the other two substances worked their way to the bottom. The double comb is rather appropriately termed a 'devil,' and, as all the powder has to pass through a very fine sieve, no extraneous matter or ill-ground granules can get among the mixed materials.

Having followed these substances thus far, we now accompany them to the incorporating-mills, where they are pressed, and squeezed, and rolled into a homogeneous mass.

These mills are simple enough, but their power is tremendous. In lack of engravings we will attempt to describe an incorporating-mill by

means of familiar objects. Set a couple of muffins on edge, about two inches apart, and run a knitting-needle through their centres. Now place the muffins in a saucer, and there is a very decent though distant imitation of a powder-mill; merely requiring that for the muffins should be substituted a pair of blocks of marble or iron discs, about seven feet in diameter and eighteen inches thick, an iron rod to take the place of the knitting-needle, and a similarly shaped 'bed' of iron or marble to represent the saucer. The 'runners,' as the upright discs are called, revolve freely on the axle, and, as the axle itself is turned continually by machinery, they exert a terrific force on any substance placed in the bed.

The reader may here remark that the friction of stone against stone or iron against iron would produce sparks, and infallibly blow up all the powder. So it would if these substances were permitted to come in contact, but they are prevented from doing so by the layer of powder which is being ground, and which actually becomes its own protector.

By legal enactment, only forty-two pounds' weight of powder may be ground in a mill at one time. Each 'charge,' as this weight is technically called, is laid carefully on the bed of the mill, and spread as evenly as possible, and then sprinkled with a certain amount of distilled water, called professionally 'liquor.' Two wooden scrapers are so arranged that, as the runners revolve, the powder is continually removed from the sides of the bed, and thrown under the runners; and when all is arranged, a handle is pulled, and the puissant machine begins its task.

There is something almost awful in these machines, and to remain within the house requires a little—just a little—resolution. You look into the bed, and you see a blank space; you look at the runner as it remorselessly revolves, and you see another blank space exactly coincident with the former. Let those two portions of naked iron touch each other, and away goes the whole mill into the air. Nearer and nearer roll the runners; closer and closer

seems the impending fate. There is now no time for flight, so you watch the result in silent horror; when, just as the explosion appears inevitable, round comes a scraper, flings a supply of powder under the wheel, and you breathe freely again.

In this establishment no less than seventy of these mills are kept at work. Day and night the terrible wheels roll their ceaseless course, requiring no aid from the hand of man, but working, working, with a tireless energy, as if Michael Scott had imprisoned within their massive forms the restless imp that cleft the Eildon Hills in three. Little light is needed for these mills, as the superintendent has but to put in the charge, set the machinery at work, look in occasionally to see that all is right, and, after a definite time, to remove the powder. After sunset, each mill is illuminated by a lantern, placed on the exterior of the building, separated from the machinery by a pane of strong glass, and set in a shallow pan of water, in order to extinguish any sparks that might be given out.

The incorporation is a most important process in the manufacture, and the longer that the materials are kept under the runners, the better is the powder. Common powder, for blasting purposes, only remains in the mill for a very short time; while the best sporting gunpowder endures at least ten hours' grinding.

Strength, it may be here observed, is by no means the only essential for good powder, uniformity being even more requisite than mere strength, especially for military purposes. It is easy enough to make powder strong; but to make it of uniform strength is quite another matter; the least alteration in the proportion of the ingredients, a few turns more or less of the mill, or even the amount of liquor employed, exerting a wonderful influence on the powder. Artillerymen say that they would always prefer to be served with inferior, but uniform powder, to the best and strongest powder that can be made, but where the strength is uncertain.

A most ingenious and withal

simple apparatus has been affixed to the mills, in order to lessen the danger of an explosion. It may be received as an axiom that an incorporating-mill never 'blows,' except through some neglect or carelessness on the part of an attendant. But as men will be careless, and mills will accordingly blow, it is as well to confine the damage, if possible, to the individual mill where the accident took place, and so to prevent more than a single charge, *i. e.*, forty-two pounds, of powder from exploding. This is no easy matter; powder being a most eccentric substance, sometimes enduring the contact of flame without injury, and sometimes exploding, as if in sympathy with another explosion that has taken place at a distance. In this establishment, however, the problem has been successfully solved, and even though six or seven mills are placed in a row, and worked by the same shaft, it is impossible that more than one should explode.

Over each pair of runners is a large copper vessel, holding about fifty gallons of water, and fixed to a revolving shaft that runs through the whole series of mills. The water vessels and shaft are so balanced that they would overturn themselves were they not held upright by a trigger-catch. Just below the water-vessel is a flat board or shutter laid horizontally, and communicating with the trigger-catch. As soon, therefore, as one of the mills explodes, the shutter is lifted by the shock, liberates the trigger-catch, and all the vessels simultaneously empty themselves into the mills, laying the powder some six or eight inches under water. The same effect can be produced by pulling a handle, which is fixed within reach of the attendant. The evening before we visited this establishment, one of the mills had 'blown,' through the wilful neglect of a workman. Though quite close to the dwelling-house, little harm had ensued. The culprit had been rather severely scorched, but was doing well, owing to the cotton wool which had been immediately placed on the injured parts; the shed had been blown to pieces; the runners had been rough-

ened, and required to be re-faced, and about three hundredweight of powder had been drowned. As, however, the sheds are made for the very purpose of being blown to pieces, and can be run up again in a few hours, the damage was of a very trifling kind, while the drowned powder would be removed from the mills, the saltpetre extracted and used again.

After the powder has been subjected to the needful crushing, it is worked by the action of the runners into a kind of paste, technically called 'mill-cake.' If permitted to dry, the mill-cake is black, moderately compact and fragile, being easily broken by the fingers. If reduced to the granular state in which powder is sold, without undergoing a further process, the grains would be too soft; and, accordingly, the cake is taken from the mills to a room in which are several powerful hydraulic presses. Here it is worked in rather a peculiar manner.

First, the massive doors of a press are opened, so as to expose the whole interior, and on the bottom of the press is carefully spread a layer of the mill-cake. Upon this layer a sheet of rather thick copper is arranged. Another layer of mill-cake is spread over the copper, and by degrees the whole press is filled with alternate layers of mill-cake and sheets of copper. The doors are then closed and secured; and the powder is exposed to a pressure of four hundred pounds to the square inch. After a time, this pressure is relaxed, the doors re-opened, and the powder is removed in slabs about an inch thick, and as hard as block marble, which they much resemble. It is now called 'press-cake,' and if broken by a blow from a wooden or copper mallet, it presents a fracture clear and sharp-edged as that of stone.

Still following our powder through its successive stages, we take a piece of press-cake and repair to the 'cornering' house, *i. e.*, the place where the hard block cake is broken into the little black grains with which we are so familiar.

Before entering this house, we are forced to take certain precautions.

An attendant makes his appearance by the door, carrying a number of great leather boots, in which no metal is used. Stopping before the gate, he puts a pair of these gigantic 'slippers,' as they are facetiously called, within the door, and directs the visitor to step carefully over the high threshold into the slippers. They are so big that even the giant of whom we have lately heard so much, would find little difficulty in wearing them, and their stiff, bucket-like tops produce a very odd sensation about the calf of the leg. The gait employed by the wearer is perforce of a very unique description, and can only be compared to the walk of a fly that has just escaped from a milk jug. Altogether, the inexperienced visitor feels as if he could realize the sensations of an Esquimaux. On leaving the house, similar precautions are taken; the visitor standing with his back to the door, and stepping out of the slippers over the threshold, and on the outer earth. The slippers are worn in most of the houses. The workmen are even prohibited from wearing pockets, lest they should carry unextinguished pipes, or the inevitable lucifer-match, into the works. Beer is another of the prohibited articles.

The floor is covered with tanned hides, fastened down with copper nails, and the most jealous precautions are taken that not even a grain of sand should find admittance within the house. Nothing is conveyed to or from the corning-house by land, an elaborate system of canals having been ingeniously cut, so that the press-cake is brought to the house in boats, and the completed powder removed in the same manner. Numerous bridges cross the canals; and, lest a passenger should happen to kick a little dirt into the boat while passing beneath, the boatmen sound a whistle as soon as they approach a bridge, and do not cease until the vessel is fairly clear. No workman, on penalty of immediate discharge, ventures to cross a bridge as long as a whistle is sounding.

We will now enter the 'corning-house,' a place almost as black and grimy as the charcoal-shed. Here are numbers of metal rollers, covered

with projecting teeth of various sizes, and arranged in sloping rows, like flights of cylindrical stairs. The whole place is traversed by a complicated system of leather straps to which little buckets are attached, these being called Jacob's ladders.

All looks harmless enough: the superintendent puts our piece of press-cake into a hopper, and then gives a quiet nod to the attendant. The man gives a small wheel a half turn, draws a handle out of the wall, just as an organist draws a stop, and a slight trembling is felt throughout the building. He then goes to a lever, gives it a pull, and one of the machines begins slowly to move, with a kind of subdued creaking, as if it preferred remaining quiet. Presently another handle is drawn out, and another machine begins to work, until the whole set are in motion. They rapidly increase their speed, the rollers whirl round, crushing the stony mill-cake like snow; the hoppers clatter and shake; the Jacob's ladders run swiftly over their pivots; everything bangs, quivers, or groans; the noise is deafening, and it seems as if nothing could save the mill from being blown into a thousand pieces.

Taking courage, however, from the imperturbable calmness of our guide, and catching as well as we can the few words that the uproar permits to reach our ears, we watch the press-cake, as it is roughly broken by one set of rollers, passed on to another set, which further reduce it, picked up by Jacob's ladders and conveyed to another machine for some new process, picked daintily out of the receptacle by other Jacob's ladders, and subjected to all kinds of complicated sufferings, taken to another corner of the building, and freed from dust; and, lastly, watch it, as, self-sorted, it pours itself into the tubs that are placed beneath certain spouts.

The corning-house is indisputably the most trying to the nerves of a stranger. In the mills, the powder is damp, and there is only one mode by which it is likely to explode. But in the corning-house it is dry, flies about in light dust, is trodden under foot, gets in the mouth, leaving a

fine flavour of saltpetre behind, and is apparently on the point of being ignited in twenty different places at once.

Recent improvements are nowhere more conspicuous than in this part of the establishment. Formerly, the process of corning occupied the personal labour of many men. The press-cake was broken to pieces with wooden mallets, and the fragments reduced to the proper size and form by being forced through the interstices of a sieve. A wooden bowl was placed in each sieve together with the powder, and the rapid rotating movement, which was communicated by machinery, caused the bowl to squeeze the powder through the sieve, and form it into grains.

Beside the manifest imperfection that attended this arrangement, such as the clouds of dust continually flying off as the bowl crushed the powder through the holes, several dangers were likely to ensue. Supposing, for example, that by some mischance a fragment of stone or any other hard substance had crept into one of the sieves, it would probably be broken after a few minutes, and then the fragments would strike against each other, and produce a spark. Now, however, no such clumsy machine is used, the powder being literally bitten into properly-sized grains; and if a hard substance should happen to have been introduced, the machine quietly drops it into a receptacle, and proceeds with its work. The adaptation of machinery by which this end is attained, is remarkably elegant, but could not be explained without the use of diagrams.

When delivered from the corning-machine, the powder is for the first time entitled to the name, and for many practical purposes is ready for use. It has yet, however, to undergo two more processes before it is fit for the musket; for the grains are not quite dry, and rough, dull, and grayish-black, without the gloss which is so much admired. This gloss is imparted in two ways, friction being, however, employed in both.

Still following our powder, we are taken to the 'glazing' house, a place

which we should certainly have set down as the churn-house of a very large dairy. Rows upon rows of barrels are seen arranged horizontally, and revolving on pivots by means of leather straps communicating with a water-wheel. The powder is placed in these barrels, the aperture closed, and the machines then set in motion, when the barrels begin to revolve, at first slowly, but afterwards increasing their speed, until they whirl round at an almost fearful rate.

The friction of the grains against each other is quite sufficient to produce the glossy surface, and the longer the powder is left in the barrel, the higher is the polish it takes. Some powder now before us, which is black and shining as if cut from jet, was kept for ten hours in the corning-barrels, and all the finer and better kinds of powder are glazed in the same way. The coarse blasting powder, however, is found to keep better if faced with plumbago, and, accordingly, a little of that substance is placed in the barrels together with the powder. During the process of glazing, a vast amount of caloric is evolved, and the hot state of the barrels—on which the hand can scarcely be borne—is really terrifying.

The last process in powder-making consists in driving out the moisture which has clung to the grains, in spite of all the varied ordeals which they have been forced to undergo. This perilous task is achieved in a house situated at a considerable distance from the rest of the establishment. We enter the house, and feel very warm; a second door is opened, and we feel very hot, as well we may, the thermometer standing at 130° Fahr. The whole of the interior is fitted up with tier upon tier of shallow trays, about an inch in depth, in which the powder is arranged in successive ridges, like a black potato ground. The necessary heat is obtained by means of steam-pipes, which traverse the building, and raise the temperature without endangering the contents. Our companions soon began visibly to liquefy, and retreated into the cooler air; but a constitution habituated to

the Turkish bath can endure a wonderful amount of heat, and enabled us in the present instance to examine the structure without the slightest inconvenience.

After having dried the powder it is necessary to ascertain whether its strength is of the requisite force. For this purpose, two ounces of the powder are carefully weighed, inserted into a mortar by means of a long-nosed funnel, and a sixty-eight pound solid shot then placed on the powder. The mortar is then fired, and unless the powder propels the ball to a certain distance, it is considered defective, and may not be stored in the magazine.

It is astonishing how loud a report is made by the two ounces of powder, and how far the huge shot is projected by so insignificant a charge. The mortar being fixed, the line taken by the shot is well known, so that any one who does not venture on that line is perfectly safe. Still, it was rather startling to see a man walk off with a wheelbarrow, during the process of loading, permit the shot to pass high over his head, and then coolly pick it up, put it in his wheelbarrow, trundle it back again to the mortar, and wipe it clean, in readiness for the next fire.

After the powder has passed all the tests, it is conveyed by water to the magazine, a place which seems impossible to be exploded, even if a burning house were to fall on it.

A deep square pit is sunk in the ground, and the sides faced or 'revetted' with solid brickwork, much like the trench of a large fort. In the centre of this excavation the magazine is built, and the whole edifice stands about three feet deep

in water. There is no mode of access but by water, the canal leading to its door passing through a tunnel, which communicates with the rest of the works, and also leads to a wharf, where vessels can be loaded and despatched at once to sea. The roof of the magazine is one large cistern, always kept full of water, so that nothing but the most reckless neglect of every precaution can injure so well-protected a spot. All the dangerous houses are guarded after a similar manner, and are isolated by solid banks of earth and brickwork, so that if an explosion should unhappily occur, its effects would be confined to the single house where it originated.

Our space is at an end, or we could right willingly speak of the subordinate duties of the manufactory; of the ingenious methods in which the powder is packed for home use and exportation; of the making the well-known tin canisters, that have penetrated to every quarter of the globe, and have served the thirsty desert traveller as water flasks, when the original contents have been expended; of the numbers of men, women, and boys, who gain their daily bread in the mills and equal the population of a small town; of the volunteer corps, to which so many of the men belong, and of the schools at which the children receive instruction. Of all these, and many other subjects, we cannot now speak; but we must not omit to express our sense of the courtesy of Mr. Hall, who spent the greater part of a day in accompanying us through his vast establishment, and with untiring kindness pointed out every important detail, and explained the working of each complicated machine.



Drawn by J. D. Watson.

THE DOCTOR'S FORTUNE.

[See the Story.

THE DOCTOR'S FORTUNE.

I.

ON his door there was a finely polished brass plate, inscribed

MR. JAMES WOODFIELD,
Surgeon.

When he first came to this small country town—that is to say, when he first settled there as a professional man—he had been in the habit of passing in and out of that door often, and of looking with some pride at the brass; for he was a young man, only just beginning life, and it was very possible that the shining plate pointed to a future in the distance radiant with as bright a lustre as its own. Somehow, unfortunately, that future still continued to shine in the distance, and the days and weeks and months that began to drag rather heavily over the the young surgeon, seemed to bring it no nearer to him. It was very odd. He had been told on all sides what a promising opening there was in Hollowleigh for a surgeon; he had congratulated himself that the absence of M.D. after his name was of no consequence—a mere sound, often unsought by the greatest men. And, besides, there was already a physician of old standing in Hollowleigh.

And now that he had actually made the plunge, it was irritating enough to hear from other counsellors that it was foolish of him to come to Hollowleigh; that Dr. Heath had all the practice, and there was no chance for him.

But the most provoking part of the whole affair was, that James Woodfield had scarcely had time to settle in his new house, before this Dr. Heath, seeming suddenly to discover that his then residence did not suit him, had actually fixed upon the large and handsome house exactly opposite to that shining new brass plate. It was of no use for James to shake his fist at the doctor's carriage from behind the window curtains, of no use for him to wish there had been a school opposite, an asylum, anything, in fact, but that commodious residence, with its lawn

stretching down to the river on the opposite side, which had proved so attractive to the physician.

'I chose this end of the town on purpose,' muttered James, grinning at the obnoxious waggons which brought the doctor's furniture, because he lived at the other, and now he has actually followed me here. Well, I suppose there's room for both; at any rate it cannot be worse with me than it has been; for, except a poverty-stricken old woman or two, no patient has troubled me.'

And then he went to sit at the table of his little study and be miserable, which was of no use either. But the fact was, his eyes, glancing from time to time through the window, caught sight of the corner of some luxurious couch or chair peeping from under its cover; of massive picture frames and costly mirrors. And he could not help reverting to certain golden visions of his own whose brightness had faded by this time, and left them before him only the pale ghosts of what they once were. Then that carriage of the doctor's was the very thing he had indulged himself in picturing as fit for—somebody. And as the thought recurred to him, he sighed bitterly; for the time when that somebody might be the ruling genius of his house—even this little den—seemed so far off as to be almost mythical.

But he did not tell her so. He held a certain philosophy, that cheerful letters were better than sad or grumbling ones; and, even with those obnoxious waggons before the window, he, having no prescriptions to write, and nothing particular to do, had actually drawn pens and paper towards him for the purpose of writing to her.

Well, he couldn't help it. Nothing would come this time but the beginning—'My own dear little Margaret'—such a long beginning, that it lost, in fact, all the shapeliness common to beginnings. But for all that, we must feel severally guilty concerning those two adjectives, even though our Margaret may have

exceeded the average height of woman.

Having written so far, however, Mr. Woodfield's ink dried in his pen. He could not keep his eyes from the window; and the luxurious carriage had just driven up with a lady in it—two ladies; the doctor's wife and daughter, he supposed. Try his very utmost, he could not help giving way to forebodings too dismal for Margaret's eye to read; he could not think of any possible good accruing to him from the doctor's invasion—as he called it—but only harm.

If Dr. Heath had stayed where he was, a few of the people at this end of the town might have had recourse to the new surgeon; but now, of course, all the neighbourhood, as well as his old patients, would run after the great physician, who was rich and famous, and did not care about their patronage.

'The way of the world,' muttered James, after the fashion of disappointed young philosophers—'the way of the world.'

And then he saw Mr. Percival Heath—the doctor's only son—ride up to that door on a horse which drew him, in spite of himself, to the window, and made his eyes glisten.

'A splendid animal!' soliloquized the surgeon, who kept no horse—pretty well, as he thought, bitterly, if he could keep himself. 'That's the sort of thing I should like, now; make perfect, action first rate, and a fine-looking young fellow enough on him, too. I wonder if Mr. Percival goes in for the profession. Perhaps he'll be good enough to take the house next door to mine. Not that it matters, though. Oh, yes, there's the surgery bell! It's a wonder I know the sound, but I do.'

'Well, Cadger, what is it?'

Master Cadger put on the air of a boy who knew what it was to be calmly collected under a press of business, concealing the fact that he had been indulging in a solitary game of marbles in the surgery.

'It's an old party, sir, that is to say, elderly, who says as she was to call for a poor man's plaster for the chest. I was to say particular the chest, that there might be no mistake.'

Mr. Woodfield looked through his fingers at the boy, and smiled—a grim and hidden smile.

'You know very well what it is, and where to find it, Cadger,' he said; 'go and give it to her.'

'Oh, I beg pardon, sir; but is it the one directed——'

'Be off!' cried James, sharply.

For in truth, Master Cadger's air of intense occupation irritated him. The boy himself knew perfectly well that his master saw through it, but he could not know the real despondency and sinking of heart which Mr. Woodfield sometimes hid under jokes about Master Cadger's press of work.

And James, returning to his writing materials, put them away hastily.

In general, Margaret had her letter once a week as regularly as the county paper came out, and he got his answer as punctually; but she must wait another post this time. To-day he could not write to her, and it was with a certain grimness of sarcasm that he thought she would put it down to his being so busily engaged with his patients, that he had no time to write. No time! That was the greatest evil. He had too much time, and did not know what to do with it.

But the days and weeks and months went on, and things were much the same for Mr. Woodfield. There was a dogged perseverance about him, however, which refused to give up, or to lose all hope. A few patients, unremunerative it is true, but still patients, did fall to his lot. By-and-by there might be more; at any rate he was not going to give in easily. In the mean time, he could study and increase his stock of knowledge. He believed, with that strong belief in himself which rarely outlives youth, that it was in him to do great things, if only he could have an opening.

He thought, however, that he would give up going to parties, and that sort of thing. He had been advised to go as one means of making himself known; but though he had in reality gone out less for that purpose than for very weariness, and longing after something to do, yet he was getting tired of it.

He hated the idea of 'pushing the profession,' as he called it. In itself it was great and noble, and why should he use small arts to push it and himself into notice?

He had established a slight acquaintance with many of the townspeople, and, amongst others, with Mr. Percival Heath, whom he liked, but with whom he could not, perhaps, under the circumstances, have much in common, since a struggling man has little sympathy to spare for a favourite of fortune. And he was wont to think that on that young fellow everything smiled, inasmuch that it was a marvel to find him so little spoiled and so full of life and energy. Mr Woodfield wondered, too, sometimes, as he looked at the large house opposite, if its inmates ever thought of him in his struggles and unfulfilled hopes. Why should they? He was nothing to them. Dr. Heath had a perfect right to take that house if he chose. Possibly, indeed, if he had remained at the other end of the town, it would have made little difference to James. Everybody would have gone to him just the same; for why should people consult a young untried surgeon in preference to a well-known physician, who, moreover, on certain days gave consultations gratis to those who could not afford his fees?

Dr. Heath had done this for years; and the fact of a young surgeon's rash appearance in the town was no reason for the discontinuance of a charity. He began to think it was a mistake to come to Hollowleigh; nevertheless the thing was done, and he must make the best of it.

II.

It was more than a year, it was nearly two years since the polish of that brass plate had roused so complacent an expression on James Woodfield's face; and he was still, to use a significant phrase, struggling to keep his head above water. His friends, too, if he had possessed any near enough to examine into his personal appearance, might have observed that there was a slight tendency about the corners of his mouth to curve downwards, and altogether

a want of elasticity about the man very different from his buoyant air of two years ago. Such friends as he had, however, were either unobservant or not sufficiently interested in him to trouble themselves about his looks, and he went on his way drearily, with such hope as he could summon up to help him. He had gone so far as to confess that the whole affair was a decided failure. He was at times miserably depressed and anxious, almost ready to give up altogether; but if he did that, what was to become of him? A portion of his small capital was gone already: was he to throw the other after it? He might try and try, and yet have no more chance than that unlucky fly in his window had of eventually escaping the bloated spider on the watch for him.

And of course, as he looked at the fly and the web, his eyes travelled, as they always did, with a persistency which astonished himself, to that house opposite; and he saw the carriage, which was the ideal of his visions in that department, drive up and deposit the ladies of Dr. Heath's family: three ladies this time, and the third, who was only a visitor, report had decided to be Mr. Percival's fiancée.

Then he saw Mr. Percival himself ride up as usual, and noticed that his one hand was bound up in a handkerchief. He wondered idly what that was for, and then, as he watched the young man assisting the ladies from the carriage, and marked how he lingered beside that third one, who did not yet belong to the family, he was conscious of a feeling so nearly akin to envy that he took himself to task at once for it.

'You are developing into a surly brute, James Woodfield,' he said; 'a selfish cynic, who would snarl at another's happiness because your own is—ah, well! where is it, and when will the good time come?'

After all, though Dr. Heath's removal had done his cause no good, yet it had furnished him with considerable occupation, speculation, and some amusement. And as it grew darker that night he took his usual position, with his elbows on

the window-sash, to watch the arrival of the doctor's guests, for there was a dinner-party at the opposite house, and he saw amongst the arrivals magnates whose patronage would have made the heart of the struggling young surgeon glad, while, in a professional point of view, Dr. Heath cared very little, if at all, for them.

But the doctor's reception-rooms faced the lawn, so that after the arrivals were over, and he had counted some dozen of ladies in the gossamer attire which needs to be made fireproof, and as many gentlemen looking mournful in funeral suits, there was nothing for him to do but watch the flickering lamp outside or turn to the interior of his little room. He chose the latter alternative, and as he turned he became aware of Master Cadger caressing the door handle and seemingly waiting his pleasure.

'What do you want, you rascal? Why don't you——'

'Knock, sir?' interposed Master Cadger, briskly. 'Did, sir, if you please; couldn't make you hear. It's only a party as has been telling me *he's* going away.'

By a peculiar jerk of his thumb Master Cadger appeared to intimate that '*he*' was Dr. Heath. At least so James understood it.

'Dr. Heath! Going away?'

'Yes, sir. Leastways *he's* going to foreign parts, and can't come back, not in a day exactly, you know.'

'Well,' said Mr. Woodfield, collecting himself, 'what has that to do with me?'

'Nothing, sir. It's only as the party's always doctoring, and was anxious in case she might be took sudden and no doctor to be had. I told her you would be at home, unless, to be sure, some of the country patients sent for you.'

'That will do,' said James. 'You can go.'

It is not to be denied that Mr. Woodfield's heart did beat with a spectral hope. If the doctor was going abroad might there not be a chance for him? It seemed only reasonable to suppose there would, since if people were ill a new doctor must be better than none.

The fates were surely in league

against James Woodfield. No sooner was his hope conceived than a rude hand dashed it to the ground. Dr. Heath would leave a deputy behind him.

III.

Mr. Percival Heath was walking down the Hollowleigh road towards the town. He walked slowly, for he had an unusual sense of discomfort, which he could neither shake off nor analyse. It weighed upon him with a very heavy oppression; it was like nothing that he could think of so much as terror; vague, unreasoning, but strong terror; springing from no cause that he could discover, and pointing to no result. He could not make it out. He had thought to shake it off in the open air, but it seemed to get worse instead of better, so he had turned back towards home. Was he going to be ill? He had been blessed hitherto with such vigorous health that he knew nothing about illness.

He raised the hand that had been bound up, and on which there appeared a slight scar, to his forehead confusedly. As he did so he reached a point in the road where the river, running parallel with it, became suddenly visible by the lowering of the high road-side bank.

Mr. Percival started back with a pang of desperate misery. He could not bear the sight of that water: he was afraid of it.

Behind him came two men with some dogs, and he was afraid of them also; afraid of the men, but more so of the dogs; and more than all he dreaded that gurgling water. He was horribly afraid of it.

He stood still and put his hand up again to his forehead, and his eye caught the little scar. A cold perspiration broke out over him, and a single ejaculation passed his lips—

'Good God!'

It was no irreverent outburst lightly spoken. It was — no one, however, could possibly tell all that those two horrorstricken words were meant to express, for a ghastly suspicion had broken upon Mr. Percival's mind—a suspicion that a fate more horrible than anything he could conceive hung over him.

That little scar had been left by the bite of a dog. It was a fortnight now since, in pity to a screaming child, he had attempted to drive a dog from its path, and the beast had snapped at him and passed on. He remembered now that the dog had been killed, and that some idle rumour about his being mad had floated about feebly for a day or two. Such rumours, however, being things of course, he had never thought of it a second time, never even experienced a sensation of uneasiness until now. But now——

He was a strong-willed, energetic man. To get home quietly if possible, to keep down this horrible dread, as though his heel were upon it, and walk like other men, that was what he set himself to do. Already the air around him was instinct with mad lurid eyes and slaving jaws, and he scarcely knew, as he walked up the street, whether it was the houses that were bearing down heavily upon him or his own fancies that made them seem to do so. He got into the house and called his servant. He spoke to the man as calmly as he could, and gave him a message. It was fruitless. Dr. Heath's deputy had gone out; time of return uncertain.

'William,' said Mr. Percival, 'I'm afraid the dog that bit me was mad. Go across and fetch Woodfield. Tell him what I say, but not a word to any one else. Be quick.'

Mr. James Woodfield was in the little room called by courtesy his study. He had been there pretty nearly all day, not having spirits, perhaps, to go out. By a singular coincidence the subject he had been studying, and which had roused considerable interest in his mind, was a cure that had been performed in India of a case of hydrophobia. He had made himself pretty well master of the details, and it was a certain psychological feature which occupied him when, after the customary knock, Master Cadger ushered in Dr. Heath's servant.

'Beg pardon, sir. Party wouldn't wait; must see you directly.'

The rest of Master Cadger's speech, which was irrelevant, was spoken to himself in the surgery, while Mr.

Percival's case already lay before the doctor in his study.

Mr. Woodfield was sensible of a strange thrill through all his nerves as he listened, and a single phrase out of that pamphlet which he had been reading kept repeating itself like an echo in his brain.

Without a word he followed the man across the street into the hall, where he had seen so many gossamer-robed ladies and black-coated gentlemen, up the wide semicircular staircase, which might almost have swallowed up his whole house, and into young Heath's room.

Mr. Percival sat on the bed in his shirt sleeves, and he was trembling all over, and shrank back with an expression of terror as the doctor entered.

Mr. Woodfield turned and looked full into the servant's face.

'You'll do,' he said. 'Come in and sit down there, out of sight, till I want you.'

Then he turned the key in the door softly and went forward. He seemed to have risen with the occasion out of his despondency into a man of iron nerves and indisputable authority.

'Woodfield,' said Mr. Percival, looking at him with eyes scared and bloodshot, 'you see I know you: keep off for your own sake. Let no one come near me.'

James never once took his eyes off the patient's face while he felt his pulse, and Mr. Percival returned the gaze like one fascinated.

'Listen to me,' said James, still with his hand on the young man's wrist, and still looking at him with the same steady eye. 'There is no proof that the dog was mad. You are strong and healthy. You have never been a drinker or tampered in any way with your constitution?'

'No.'

'Then there is hope for you. The virus will have less chance, and my treatment more. Are you capable of following what I say?'

'Yes.'

'Then listen. I know that you are energetic and strong-willed. Exert your will. Exert it first to believe that all you think you see or feel is, in fact, delusion; exert it,

above all, to keep as quiet as possible. The will may be over-rated as well as under-rated; but it is an instrument of immense power. If you feel that you are giving way to terror, try to fix your eyes on mine. Come, you are calmer already. I am going to bleed you.'

'Doctor,' said the young man, 'you *know* the dog was mad. Promise one thing, and I will have perfect faith in you. Swear to kill if you cannot cure.'

James responded: 'The means I am about to use are certain death or certain cure.'

'Did they ever cure?'

'Yes.'

IV.

'Sir,' said the servant, horror-stricken, 'you have bled him to death!'

'No,' replied James, with a whitening about his lips, 'only to death's door.'

In fact, the young man lay motionless as a corpse, and colourless; and only the faintest dimness was visible on the glass which the man held to his lips.

'Will he ever get over it, sir?'

'I hope so.'

'Oughtn't he to be bound?'

'No,' said James, quickly. 'I will be here when he comes to himself.'

Mr. Woodfield went home, but not for long. He stayed but to take such refreshment as was absolutely necessary, and to go over once again the details of the case, which, by what he conceived to be so strange a chance, he had been studying when the servant fetched him. Then he went back.

It was night, and the gas under which he had watched those ball-room guests so often shone upon him as he ascended the stairs. In the lobby he was startled by the rustling of a light dress; by the sudden appearance beside him of a radiant little creature whom he had seen before, but only at a distance; and by two small white hands grasping his arm with imploring restraint.

It was that third one—the poor little girl who was to have been Mr. Percival's wife; and she was in her

evening dress. Probably she had but just heard the terrible nature of his illness, for in spite of all caution it had oozed out; and as James looked at the wild dumb agony in the eyes that sought his face to read if there were any comfort there, he experienced once again that strange thrill—that sense of exaltation which had roused him before into the exertion of an unsuspected power.

'Doctor, doctor,'—and then the girl's voice sunk into a gasping whisper—'is it true? Is it, is it?'

Mr. Woodfield took one of the poor little hands in his own. He felt so aged and grave in this sudden crisis which had drawn forth all his strength; he was so sorry for her, thinking, perhaps, for a moment of his own Margaret under such circumstances, that he did not dream of being ceremonious.

'My dear young lady,' said James, 'I have heard of one recovery from such a seizure, and only one. The means that effected that recovery I am using.'

'You would not deceive us! They have telegraphed for Dr. Heath, but they were uncertain of his address, and it might never reach. Sir, you must save him.'

The little hand was clinging to his still, and absolutely wringing it in the intolerable misery of this sudden blow. She had been so happy only yesterday!

'It is in higher hands than mine,' said James, gravely. 'But be comforted; I tell you the truth, I have hope.'

'Thank you, doctor. God bless you, and help you to save him! I will——'

But he heard no more, for her voice had broken into sobs, and she had turned away from him hurriedly.

James went on into the sick-room, which was still quiet as he left it. At another time the possibility of the telegram reaching Dr. Heath and bringing him home to interfere with the case might have been disheartening, but he had now no space to think about it. He was like one in a trance; the strangeness of his owing his first serious case to Dr. Heath's son never even

struck him then. He was so resolute to keep his nerves, his whole strength of mind and body strung up to that extreme pitch of exaltation and full belief in his own power, on which he believed that power in a great measure to depend. When the patient awoke to consciousness the doctor's eye must meet his; must communicate by a power which might or might not be mesmeric—James did not stop to argue that—to him some of his own calmness and concentration of purpose; must keep him if possible by that mesmeric sympathy from those scared, wandering glances into the distant corners where shapes of horror lurked.

And again and again the bleeding was repeated, each time to the manifest terror and distrust of the servant, who thought Mr. Woodfield certainly meant to kill his master.

But James persevered. His whole heart was in the case; his whole will set upon saving the patient. Night and day he was with him; his own air and manner were so totally changed, that even in the doctor's servants' hall there had arisen a certain awed respect for the poor surgeon once a fair butt for witticisms. It was not to be expected that the long strain left no impress upon James Woodfield, but if it had been doubly long and doubly hard he would have undergone it gladly for the great reward of the result.

When Dr. Heath came home in horrible agony of mind, having received tardily, and by a mere chance, one of those letters which were sent after him at first, he looked upon the attenuated figure of his son;—eyes which recognized him, with no wild light of madness in them, lips that spoke to him calmly and hopefully—as upon one restored from the dead.

And at once he hurried across the street to the little house opposite, from a window of which James saw him coming, and hastened to receive him.

The outpouring of Dr. Heath's gladness is of little consequence. It was rumoured afterwards that he had offered to take Mr. Woodfield

into partnership, which offer, however, James did not accept, and this reticence probably added no little to the furore which began from this date for the young surgeon. The wonderful cure flew about in all directions; it was on everybody's lips. Patients began to flow in a marvellous tide towards the shining brass plate, to the delight of Master Cadger's heart and the increase of his bodily exercise.

'Your son has recovered,' said James Woodfield; 'but you know, Dr. Heath, that what I did was a fearful thing to do; that in nine cases out of ten it would be fatal, and that if his constitution had not been of iron, and his health perfect, I must have killed him.'

'You have saved my son,' responded the doctor, 'and it will make your fortune. I hope it will. I believe it will.'

v.

Dr. Heath was right. Twelve months after that the brass plate was removed from the little corner house. It shone upon the shrubby gate leading to Dr. Heath's old residence at the opposite end of the town.

There was a bay horse curvetting in front of that gate, and upon him sat Mr. Percival Heath, looking as handsome as ever, and he was talking and laughing with the young surgeon.

'Come in, Heath,' said James, with sudden gravity, pulling a bell and pointing out Mr. Heath's horse to a groom who answered the summons. 'I have a favour to ask of you,' he added when they reached the house.

'Glad to hear it. You are so precious independent that I never have a chance to prove my friendship. Well, old fellow, what is it?'

'I am going to take a very important step.'

'Not to retire just yet.'

'No, no, be serious.'

'Nor to take a partner?'

'No. I mean yes,' added James. 'I am going to take a partner, and I want you to be my best man on the occasion. Now do you understand?'

'I understand. But suppose I were going to play principal in just such another affair?'

'I know,' said James, suddenly seeing before him a bright little figure, with a face of misery, and two white hands clasped on his sleeve. 'I wish you all happiness, Percy. But knowing this, I have arranged that my affair, as you call it, shall take place first. I wish you to do me this favour very much.

You have been the agent of my better fortune, and it will be a good omen to have you at my wedding.'

'So be it.'

'And now,' said James, 'come and look at my new carriage. It isn't exactly the thing I once set my mind upon for my wife; but one must be moderate at first, you know. This will do to begin with, eh? Only for you I should never have had one at all.'

HOLIDAY WALKING TOURS:—OVER CONVENTIONAL GROUND UNDER CONVENTIONAL COST.

IN other words, from London Bridge to Milan (by way of Paris, the Bernese Oberland, the Simplon, and the Italian lakes,) and back (through Chamouni and Lyons,) for four hundred francs—sixteen pounds—or, for an average outlay of less than eleven shillings and sixpence for each of the twenty-eight days of last July occupied in the excursion. This sum covered all expenses for travelling, bed, and board; together with those extras that will occur during the most economically planned tour—unexpected gratuities and repairs to boots, guides necessary and unnecessary, alpenstock, plans of cities, baths, nay, even such a dashing luxury as a pit seat in the Theatre of Varieties at Paris.

In the introductory chapter to his 'Story of Mont Blanc,' the late Mr. Albert Smith stated that, when a medical student at the Hôtel Dieu, he and another equally humbly-appointed fellow-traveller started from Paris to go over much of the same ground with only twelve pounds apiece to last five weeks. At the end of the first fortnight they were pleased to find their money holding out so capitally: there is no reason, therefore, to doubt that they failed to perform the wonderful feat, for anybody but German students, of travelling on seven shillings a day. But then that happened in 1838; years before scores were induced by him, and hundreds by the blessed railways, to visit Switzerland, and before the modern times of annually well-puffed sensation performances amid the Alps. Simple happy ages! Hotel expenses were a third less than now. And did a pedestrian then tread regions accessible by moderate outlay and exertion only, he ran no risk of haply breaking down the politeness of any of a new race of tourists whom he might meet, provoking their silent contempt had he 'done' no more novel or perilous glacier excursion than 'the Jardin,' or getting palpably snubbed as a sheer cockney should he confess to have

been up the commonplace Rigi, and actually to have enjoyed himself on that Delectable Mountain. A pound a day is—it will very soon be *was*—the usual allowance for a month's continental holiday; and, therefore, although our trip (for it was taken by two persons) might have been performed still more economically, it yet was one well 'under conventional cost'—a *juste-milieu* between the easy careless expenditure of those lucky fellows, born with silver spoons in their mouths, who have plenty of money in their pockets, and the rigid economy, the living on the edge of a knife, of those with only steel-forks for such birthday-plate, who, when abroad, must still carefully bear in mind the *res angusta domi*. To attain our end we neither went to inns we are now ashamed to name, nor defrauded of its due the *tronc* of the Great St. Bernard Convent, nor starved, nor were always uneasily thinking 'what can be next done to save?' But we trudged it, averaging four-and-twenty miles on each of the seventeen days afoot, and put up with the third class on railways and the fore deck of steamers on other travelling days; we frequented good hotels, and sometimes the best (with management the cheapest and wisest policy), and we ever fared well but plainly; in fine, though we 'left sack' when it was not tolerable as well as cheap, we nevertheless 'lived cleanly as a nobleman should do.' And these brief notes of the happy month, a green and pleasant spot to rest the mind's eye upon while memory lasts, are more especially submitted to those who have never been over the ground but may be contemplating a yet unmarked out tour this summer. Also as a great part of the enjoyment of a tour consists in anticipation and retrospect, prolegomena and an appendix are added to the present outline of one on paper. This article consists, then, first, in a gossip ere starting concerning holiday walking tours,

companionship, and equipment; secondly, in plain statements about each day's work, hotels, guide-book remarks, and so forth; lastly, in reckoning up expenses and scattering such crumbs as may remain over and above those sparsely strewn to mark the way. Some of it may be of use, notwithstanding that nowadays 'everybody knows Switzerland.'

In the beginning let it be broadly laid down that no man can thoroughly enjoy a holiday if he has plenty of them. The keenest pleasure is reserved for him alone to whom the jaunt is the great event of the year, and not merely a mark from a white stone, but the one 'pure, perfect, and entire chrysolite' itself, which he finds annually whilst delving daily for the necessary gold. They who now and then can get a few days' run with or without asking have no notion of the delicious sensation that the one holiday brings to the mortal closely occupied in an unchanging routine of business. Take, for example, a clerk whose leave extends (as customary) from four o'clock on some Friday afternoon to ten A.M., sharp, on the Monday fortnight or three weeks following. As he wakes next morning, with returning consciousness the thought flashes up that his holiday—yes, it's all right and no dream—*his* holiday, fairly earned, has commenced—he hasn't been kicked out of bank or office—no, the berth is being kept open till his return, while all the rest of the fellows are working double tides in his absence—Merciful Powers! this is an ecstasy. A week o' Sundays vanishes in comparison. No doubt, also, men who snatch a respite from work at their curacy, with the pen, or whatever it may be, so that their noses are constantly at some grindstone in the mill of life, find such far sweeter than when in blithe college days, sauntering through 'the poll,' they had the leisure of half the year, and a kind somebody to pay their bills.

The next element of holiday happiness is a pleasant companion. Better go alone than not at all, yet a good comrade is above price. It

is not recorded that Damon and Phintias ever cruised in a small yacht or took a walking tour together, although Orestes and Pylades might have combined the two when secretly repairing from Phocis to Argos: but in modern times nothing tests a friendship so severely as either of these relaxations which too often only chills its warmth instead of being its fruition, as fondly hoped. The wise man will have a care with whom he risks the enjoyment of his year's holiday. Small trials are inseparable from every trip. It is indeed the reverse of jolly for men to walk side by side for half a day through some of Nature's loveliest scenes, exchanging only rare monosyllables—if so much—because one sulks, or 'cuts up roughly,' at something done and not to be helped. Let those who are likely to be cursers of the steeps they climb and of the fates which ordain them to do certain things and bring them to given places at particular times, or irreconcilable bewailers of existing circumstances, or no masters of the pleasant social art of giving as well as taking, let all such—including dead-level men who have no 'go,' and don't particularly care what they see and do—let all such be deemed unprofitable allies, fit spoilers of the chief charm of those delights Nature and Art can bring. But the fellow who, if not of infinite jest, yet has his flashes of merriment and an excellent fancy, who can be grave and gay at the right times, good-tempered, willing to put a bright face on matters as they stand, and from first to last will take a lively interest in the whole business of pleasure—let such a one be caught up, and advised and conferred with by the intending tourist in the spring, when the young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of summer jaunts. Anon, as the starting day draws nigh, will he, training, laborious, every morning take the six-mile walk before he breaks his fast, fully doubling it ere night; and soon with joyous mien his comrade thus accost: 'I say, old fellow; we can save another three or four ounces' weight in our knapsacks.'

'No! recollect we've knocked the

bear's grease on the head, and the ends of all the straps have been cut short off. Impossible!

'Not at all. We shan't walk in braces, and yet must take something in that way. Now I've had two strips of Venetian-blind tape cut to the proper length and button-holed. Only half an ounce to carry—no buckles, don't you twig?'

This is the practical, enthusiastic, cheery, right stamp of walking tour companion; and when one meets with him thrice happy are the twain. Whither they go is decided, it is to be hoped, by the plain sensible reason that there they expect to get the best return for time and money spent. If staying within the four seas, not doing so merely in blind obedience to the rigid unreasonable dictum of many unsatisfactory people, 'they ought to see their own country first,' while they would much rather visit foreign parts; if going abroad, not from a snobbish belief that it is 'the thing,' when they would be far happier at home. But no easily accessible places offer such an entire change of scene, men, and manners—and probably, therefore, so great an attraction—to the workday Englishman as Switzerland and its adjacent countries.

They who would at all times be their own masters, and free to go or stay anywhere, take no other baggage than a knapsack; despite the swell friend's innuendoes about a consequent lack of linen, his sneers at making a toil of pleasure, his prophecies of a speedy disgust of carrying a lump on their backs, and, finally, upon finding their purpose fixed, his classical apostrophe, '*I, demens, et scævas curre per Alpes*.' Now of knapsack travellers there are various sorts. 'Toothbrush, bit of soap, spare shirt, and pair of socks, sir, are all a man wants,' cry the rigorists. But, obviously, their simplicity is too severe to meet the likeliest mishap. If caught in a storm, they have at most the choice of three alternatives: one mad—to let wet clothes dry on them; two thoroughly unsatisfactory—to go to bed until their clothes have been dried, or to borrow, if possible, others from landlord or waiter. Another

sect slightly amplify this stock perhaps, so as to serve them for a day or two's excursion amid by-ways, but have in addition a well-laden portmanteau, which they send from town to town. This plan looks well on paper, but practically has its disadvantages. It destroys perfect independence; for that absent portmanteau is always a source of more or less anxiety to its owner, and occasionally a bore, a hindrance; and this, of course, by the unfailing law of contraries, precisely at the most inconvenient times. In a mere holiday trip of the sort here described, a change rather than a stock of clothes is wanted. Moreover, the francs for a portmanteau's transit, and the half francs to porters for carrying it about—since it is luggage, not baggage—mount up, and are unnecessary outlays to those who wish to travel 'under conventional cost.' The best plan is to take one's whole equipment in a knapsack only. If this be done with judgment, then fatigue, trouble, and expense are, in sober truth, unknown. But apparently men don't take a little pains in their outfit: they buy a knapsack, and fill it, somehow, in a sort of haphazard way, the result being a comparative failure. It is the wisest policy to cast bread on the waters in the shape of judicious preparations before setting out; it will be found over and over again in comfort every day of the tour. Comfort is made up of attention to details. Far better to buy the few suitable wants that you can carry, and thereby be independent, than to spend money in the conveyance of an unnecessarily large supply, and not be wholly free to go or stay wherever you like. The purchases will remain ready for next year, since one successful walking tour will not suffice; it is so delightful an event, that no exertion will be spared to obtain another. As most knapsacks show how, occasionally, one can have too much of a good thing, and the equipments suggested in guide-books do not seem to serve real needs, the following opinions on the topics are submitted frankly, not without some confidence that they are worth attention, being results of the personal

experience of five *bonâ fide* knapsack tours.

The golden rule is, *Reduce the weight you have to carry to the lowest ounce possible.* Knapsacks are nearly always too heavy. As for those stiff ones with cowskin flap and pocket-covers, many cumbrous straps and buckles, and lock—why not bolts and chain as well?—they are abominations. From straps, handles, and side-pockets, most of those smart shepherd's plaid and other macintosh ones are still too heavy; none are entirely waterproof. Besides, once worn, they get stained; they hold the dirt, and consequently are not so fit to carry, or to use as a pillow, if needs be. Mention it not within range of the crack Charing Cross shops, but humble American leather-cloth—light, cheap, always clean, more waterproof, and strong enough—is the best material for the purpose. The straps, broad and thin, should not come, as conventionally, from the side next the wearer's back; for then the tendency is to throw the weight away from his shoulders and into the small of his back—misery. They should be fixed to the *top*, to horizontally draw the weight on the blade-bones: this pull is counteracted when he hooks their other ends to the bottom; hence his pack hangs perpendicularly—comfort. Side-pockets are not really necessary. Tapes should be used for the few inside fastenings. Such a knapsack, 14 in. wide and 11 in. deep, complete with straps, weighs 1 lb. 7 oz. It will easily hold the following kit, fit for town and country wear. A complete morning suit, cleverly constructed for the purpose, of the best thin woollen tweed—this is far better stuff than alpaca, being usual wear, very light, and sufficiently warm: the coat ought to have no lining or padding, nor should there be any heavy seaming about the suit. A pair of patent leather Oxford shoes, made without heels, and as easy as *slippers*, thus serving the double purpose. A flannel shirt, a linen shirt (to sleep in, yet, when clean, adding another to the day stock), three collars, a tie, two pair of merino socks, two pocket-handkerchiefs, sponge, soap, tooth-

powder and brush, small comb and hair-brush. (Sheet gutta-percha, tied by tape, is better than oiled silk to roll sponge and soap in; but it is apt to split, unless very carefully handled; however, as it weighs nothing, a spare piece should be taken.) Those who use a razor can wrap it in a bit of wash-leather, putting it, with three yards of string, nail-scissors, sticking plaster, parchment labels, taper, a few wax matches, needles, thread, buttons, and a dose or two of medicine, into an Indian-grass cigar-case, or some other light receptacle. Nought else is needful. Attention should be paid to the packing of a knapsack, so that the side next the back is flat. A light waterproof *cape* may be added: this insures the knapsack being kept dry—of more importance than the wearer, as it contains his change. Wearing a waterproof coat and carrying a pack is sadly uncomfortable work. It should not be strapped outside to wobble or get chafed, but be neatly folded to the proper size, and carried between the flaps of the knapsack. The total weight of the foregoing knapsack and its contents is 8½ lbs., a burden which no young man of average health and strength can object to carry even for thirty miles a day. Some 19 ounces may be best saved by omitting the waterproof; because if a day be wet any sensible man stays in-doors. If he chance to be caught in the rain, he good-humouredly puts up with the trifling misfortune which he can't help, and must expect; no great harm, if any, is taken while he keeps on walking. He carries a *complete change* of dress; so that, on arriving at the journey's end, he, neat as a new pin, can dine comfortably, with probably over against him a tourist, in dry leg and foot-gear it is true, but a travel-stained coat, wet through with perspiration from having been worn under a macintosh in the storm. Flannel trousers (coloured) and shirt are indispensable for walking in. A travelling waistcoat is of no use, since, practically, when on the tramp, off go braces (see *ante*), tie, collar, and waistcoat; so there would be only that additional weight to carry. In one of his books on

Swiss travel, Mr. Alfred Wills says: 'Let your boots be the best that money can buy, as there must be no chance of their coming to grief'—good advice. We take leave to add, if you have not already got Professor Meyer's sixpenny pamphlet, 'Why the Shoe Pinches,' buy it forthwith, and insist on Crispin making your boots faithfully according to the principles therein laid down. For extras, Leuthold's map, and those pages only of Murray's or the 'Practical Swiss Guide' referring to the tour, sewn in a parchment cover, are necessities; a pocket telescope and compass may be conveniences. As for the drinking flask and cup, thermometer, side-pouch, straps, roll-leather dressing-cases, housewives, stationery, patent inkstands, bottles of bear's grease, glycerine, and ointment, spare shoes as well as slippers, different sorts of socks, and other articles habitually recommended by guide-book authors, they are of far greater weight than worth. Pedestrians along ordinary routes such as ours *may* perhaps want a few of them once a day, but they *will* most assuredly wish all at the very deuce a dozen times. Nor can any umbrella serve them in walking like the indispensable alpenstock. Throughout the fine weather, which all hope to, and many do, continually enjoy, this old woman's companion must necessarily, therefore, be 'stuck through the knapsack after the Swiss fashion'—a pleasing thought, worthy of note.

*(4.) *Basle to Rigi*.—With a handful of hot breads of fantasy as stop-gaps, by first train to Lucerne, and left the outskirts of that town ere noon, with ungirded loins, to walk up the Rigi by way of Goldau—about 24 miles—almost too enthusiastic a beginning of work, if not in training. The new hotel at the Kulm is very grand, but not so jolly as the original house (now dwarfed, and open only during the thick of the autumn rush), associated with recollections of a first visit, of Titus Ledbury, Jack Johnson, and Mr. Crinks; wherein people became pleasant and

* The numeral in parentheses denotes the day of the tour.

sociable, and, indeed, were so closely packed, that they could not be very distant. This new hotel is so high that it all but shuts out the Unterwalden peaks from shivering early risers on the Kulm, and allows lazy-bones to see the effects of the sunrise on the Bernese Oberland mountains without leaving their bedrooms. Do you contemplate an ascent of the Rigi? A word, then, in friendly confidence. Make one, assuredly; go leisurely up whichever path you prefer. Even if you have been so lucky as to enjoy a fine sunset and sunrise, do not, like most folks, hurry away, but revel in the view for a few hours longer, and get it well impressed on your memory. Take Murray's advice, 'Be sure to descend to Weggis;' and then ours, 'Never say whither you have been'—never, at least, in the presence of a certain school of tourists. It is true you will have gazed on a very beautiful, and one of the most varied and intelligible panoramas in Switzerland; yet mark, the Rigi is easily accessible: the million and 'those sort (!) of people do it.' A great number of persons have lately been guilty of the habit of eating bread; hence, no doubt, the reason why your loaf from the respectable old-established baker's has suddenly become less excellent and enjoyable. Mind, if you will be so indiscreet as to publish your deed you must take the consequences. A man who has been at Zermatt will, in his heart, rank you as a snob for your pains. A man who, but for a storm, would have got almost as far as the Grands Mulets, will, by his manner, plainly say you are one, and, very properly too, will feel quite virtuous about the matter. A man who has been within an ace of inventing a pass can hardly dine at the same table with you and maintain the bare respect due to himself. For a Swiss tourist *à la mode* is justified only by his works. Stay, though; should you ever blurt out a sufficient description of the view to betray your cockney act, there is, perhaps, just the chance that credit may be saved if, with presence of mind, you say you went up Pilate. Pilate is 1,500 feet higher, and not nearly so well

known—two strong points in your favour—albeit, like many another small don, he is very fond of being capped, so that much of the view is likely to be interrupted, nor is it so complete as the Rigi one. Go, then, up the Rigi; spend a day in this very easy, beautiful, and sensible jaunt, but be wise in your generation; keep the exploit a dead secret from all who have set foot in the twenty-two cantons, and then no chance of harm can arise. If, not unnaturally, you want to astonish, be content with the effect produced on your maiden aunt when you relate how you have not only ascended a mountain nearly twice the height of Snowdon, but also have actually slept on the top. She will readily appreciate the peril of the daring act, having visited North Wales in the old posting days (changing at Cernioge-Mawr, and other now well-known places), *circa* '35. Would you 'crave a brief space, sir, in your widely-extended journal' to perpetuate the prowess in print? 'Then 'fear you have already trespassed to too great a length upon the valuable columns' of a county paper rather than of the 'Times.' Must you have an audience for your yarns? Spin them to your sweetheart; that is, if you are rash enough to have a flame, and sufficiently unthinking to fancy you can avoid the usual penalty of playing with fire.

(5.) *The Lake of Lucerne* should be seen from end to end. This was conveniently done by taking the 11 o'clock boat from Weggis to Flüelen, and returning at 1.15, arriving at Lucerne before 4. As this boat carries the St. Gothard mail-cart both ways, it waits for nobody and keeps time to a minute. Much should be sacrificed to gain a day on this grandest of lakes.

Of Lucerne inns the *Schweizer Hof* is, no doubt, the best, nor is it a dear house considering the accommodation given. On Murray's statement we, this year, to the *Balances*, old-fashioned and comfortable, but fair rather than 'very cheap.' The covered bridges are quaint and interesting, and the Swiss Guards' Monument is an agreeable surprise to many who mistrust that class of

show-places; yet the sight by which one remembers Lucerne is a fine sunset, or a moonlight view of the lake and Pilate from the Esplanade.

(6.) *Lucerne to Meyringen*, over the Brünig; the readiest way of entering the Bernese Oberland, and, considering the further objects of this tour, the best. By steamer to Gstad, and tramped the remaining 29 miles. Lungern makes the best halting-place. Thence the 4½ hours' walk along the excellent new road over the Brünig is very enjoyable. Nowhere is the Swiss chalet seen to such perfection as at Meyringen, which is the most characteristic of Oberland villages. The *Sauvage* there is a capital inn. N.B. 'Please to remember the "Lotte."'

(7.) *Meyringen to Lauterbrunnen*.—Persons going from Meyringen to Grindelwald or Lauterbrunnen will do well to take the advice of the 'Practical Swiss Guide.' 'Having visited the Reichenbach Fall and Rosenläui Glacier, do not cross the Scheideck, but return to Meyringen, steam down the Lake of Brienz to Interlaken, and so walk to either place.' All this can be done in one day (especially with a lift from Meyringen to Brienz), for a pedestrian ought by this time to be getting into fine trim. Surely the lines from the 'Lotos-Eaters,'

'And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.'

describe the peculiar fall of the Staubbach better than the always-quoted ones of Byron's. In profile it is not unlike a serpent firework, as the water drops in waving tongues. The alpenstocks sold at Lauterbrunnen are very stout and good.

(8.) *Lauterbrunnen (Mürren) to Interlaken*.—On no account should the extremely beautiful excursion to Mürren be omitted. The path cannot be mistaken. If Grindelwald be not visited, at least the valley of the Black Lutschine may be traversed for a mile or more, so as to gain a view of the Wetterhorn. Interlaken is the best head-quarters in the Oberland, and the *Alpes* one of the most comfortable hotels in the coun-

try. Here the true Englishman can rejoice in, after all, the most interesting object to him when travelling—the 'Times'—(and what interesting affairs always do go on while one is away from home!). Here presentable, gallantly disposed, and not over-tired, pedestrians can be civil to mothers, with an eye to introductions to daughters for the night's dance; resolvers of mysteries may try to decipher the real names of persons in the inscrutable Strangers' List, and philosophers can sit comfortably under the verandah, enjoy the evening, and 'be jolly and not talk.'

(9, 10.) *Interlaken to Leukerbad*, over the Gemmi: a two-days' journey. Sleep at Frütigen—both the *Adler* (*Post*) and *Helvetia*, dirty but not dear, are under one landlord—and breakfast next morning at Kandersteg. Delicious milk and fair beer are kept in snow at the Schwarenbach cabin: 'think of that' as you toil up the earlier part of the ascent of the Gemmi, 'hissing hot—think of that, Master Brook.' 'Wonders,' possibly, are, but satisfaction certainly is not, 'increased by approaching this pass the reverse way.' It is pleasanter to be able to cry out, 'There's Leukerbad at our feet! Steady, old fellow; put the drag on down this awful shoot,' than, looking at the perpendicular wall of granite, 3,000 feet high, 'Rocks et præterea nihil' apparently, how on earth are we to scale them?

(11.) *Leukerbad to Brieg*.—Leukerbad is a queer little place. The houses have been shot down in a heap, anywhere, and the streets (or rather gaps between the houses) left to find a way as best they can. We were very well treated at the *Francs*. Most inns are comfortable in which owners and their relatives take an active share in business. Here were a chamber-man and a waiting-woman; towels curiously small and thin, and dinner-napkins curiously large and thick. If Mark Tapley were to take this walk he would wish for a heavy thunderstorm to be brewing at the moment he first caught sight of the desolate, unsightly, accursed-looking Valley of the Rhone, for there would be some

credit in being jolly with such a depressing sight before his eyes. Turtmann (*Post*) is preferable to Süssen; moreover, the diligence changes horses there, hence a better chance of getting places. This diligence passes between 5 and 6 o'clock, and 'sleeps' at Brieg. We went by it, and luckily, as the Rhone had risen—owing to the thawing of the snow during recent great heats—and for about 2½ miles the road was a couple of feet deep in water.

(12.) *Brieg to Baveno*, over the Simplon.—In the 'Practical Swiss Guide' the distances, and the times of walking, between Brieg and Domo appear to be wrong. Here are our times:—

Started from Brieg .	4.7	A.M.
Reached summit .	9.28	"
" Isella .	1.32	P.M.
Caught by diligence at last gallery short of Crevola. .	3.50	"

Breakfast at Berisal, lunch at Isella (not Simplon), and occasional rests occupied 2 h. 34 m.; therefore the 39½ miles were walked in 9 h. 9 m., equal to 4½ miles an hour. Had it not been misty and cool during the uphill work we could not have attained this good average pace. The diligence did not start until 5 A.M.; thus it will be seen the Simplon cannot be 'walked as fast as driven.' However, between the last gallery and Crevola is a long hill, up which pedestrians would gain 10 minutes on the diligence (if overtaken by it as we were), and it stops nearly an hour at Domo; in this way they might easily catch it there, if wishing to reach Baveno that night, and still have had the pleasure of the glorious 44-mile walk across the Alps.

(13 to 16.) *The Italian Lakes and Milan*.—Murray's route 115 must be very good; however, tourists pressed for time may unhesitatingly sacrifice Maggiore and Lugano to Como. Bellaggio is the point to make for and not Como, as the mere familiarity of the name almost beguiles one into taking for granted. Como is a picturesque town (and a radical withal), but it is not in the midst of the finest scenery. From Milan to Como, Bellaggio, and back, is

a long, but most charming, day's excursion. Even if it is 'flat perjury to call' the highly-puffed Italian villas disappointing, as buildings, yet are we bold to do so. Those on this lake have the lovely situation to set them off; but few Italian villas can bear comparison with the tasteful and substantial ones now springing up on the banks of the Thames and in other London neighbourhoods. They are all washed white or buff, and very frequently elaborate architectural features—cornices, columns, pediments, &c.—or, worse, an arch with a view seen through it, are painted in distemper on their plain walls. The British 'Gothic cottage' of fifty years back is not, in its way, a more heartrending object than are the constant evidences of the love of sham mural decorations abiding in Italians' breasts. And the perspective sometimes! By Bacchus! it is excruciating, even to eyes that have survived the sight of the famed card of the Hôtel d'Angleterre, Athens. At Bellaggio all sorts of knick-knacks are made in olive-wood—portable souvenirs. Very tolerable light sculling-boats can be hired.

Baveno yields a fair notion of the scenery of Lago Maggiore. Both the *Bellevue* and *Poste* (good) are now called *Bellevue*, under one landlord. The fuss made about the Isola Bella seems to amount to this: the sight of its tropical vegetation is very agreeable in the spring before Nature has elsewhere shown many signs of arraying herself. From Baveno our route lay to Orta, *viâ* Mount Motterone. A guide must be taken, or from the number of ill-defined paths the right one will surely be lost: a franc or so will hire a boy. We were over against Armeno during a smart thunder-storm: suddenly the church bells rang out from the very ancient campanile—no doubt the fragment from the 'Golden Legend,'

• Fulgura frango!
Dissipo ventus!

The Lake of Orta is a little gem: see sketches in 'Brown, Jones, and Robinson,' by R. Doyle, and 'Illustrated London News,' May 22, 1858. The *San Giulio* is 'very good and comfortable,' yet scarcely 'mode-

rate.' An omnibus leaves at 5 A.M. for Arona. If, as likely, there is time to spare at Novara junction, the cathedral close by, 'a very early and noble Lombard building,' now being restored, repays a visit. Immediately opposite the Magenta station is a long trench—the common grave of the slain in the battle of June, 1859: the only monument is a simple cross of wood. At Milan, we went to the *San Marino*, on the whole a good bachelor's house; the bedrooms are dirty, but the living is capital: more than that, it is within a minute's walk of the glorious cathedral, the centre of attraction—with a sham fretted roof! Milan is a fine city: one ought to spend two days there, already knowing something of its most interesting history.

(17.) *Ivrea to Aosta*.—It is absurd to walk this distance: the diligence leaves the *Europa* at 8 A.M. arriving at 6.30. The drivers on this journey ask for a gratuity, and are satisfied with a sou! At the Aosta café the usual price of a cup of coffee and a small water ice is 16 centimes. Fruit, too, is very cheap. To the *Mont Blanc*, at the extreme end of the town, a good house, yet, it would seem, out of favour with the guide-books. People smarting under discomforts or high charges are apt to say so roundly in the visitors' book at hand; praises, however, and not complaints, are the order in the one here. Economists need not begin to indulge in a hope that, at Cormayeur, they may meet with a return guide to Chamouni; the tariff regulations prevent such an arrangement. It is not safe for strangers, or inexperienced mountaineers, to venture past the Col du Bonhomme without a guide.

(18, 19.) *Aosta to Martigny*, over the Great St. Bernard. Historical associations, the absence of a necessity for a guide, and the novelty of a night at the convent, alone form the attractions of this route. Between St. Oyen and St. Remy, Leuthold's map is incorrect, and may prompt a misleading short cut, but Murray's is correct,—what a pity this has no scale of miles!—the high road must not be quitted; it

bands to the right without passing through Bosses. It is to be hoped that tourists aren't too merciful to themselves when they come to that case of conscience—contributing to the convent *tronc*; but that as they snuggle, even in summer, under a heap of blankets in stagely beds, they bestow a thought on poor winter travellers, and resolve to practise the regulation theory of giving at least as much as the best hotel charges.

(20 to 23.) *Martigny to Chamouni and back.*—Halfway up the Forclaz is a short cut; it should be avoided: the cabin on the summit is one of the worst of its kind: the franc per passport is no longer demanded here—of pedestrians at all events; if it were they would simply walk on. At Chamouni it is impossible to gain a due idea of the height of Mont Blanc until the Brevent has been ascended. A guide is needless on this excursion: there are a great and small 'chimney,' the latter, the left-hand one, a mere crack in the rock, and too tight a fit. To the Jardin a guide is absolutely necessary; his fee now is 12 frs. The first time of making such an excursion as this on the glaciers, it is, to say the least, satisfactory to be tied together, *properly*, round the waist; beginners then can feel greater confidence among the crevasses. The rawer the mountaineers, the more reluctant are the guides to be tied to them. The Montanvert auberge furnishes a rope as well as provisions. Fresh nails to boots and a new spike to bâton are helps. The *Mont Blanc* has the credit of being the cheapest house in Chamouni; it is plain and comfortable. Two visits to the *Grande Maison* at Martigny proved it a cheap and excellent inn: M. Morand is not too great a man to cheerily receive his guests in old-fashioned style as a host should.

(24.) *The Lake of Geneva.*—Leaving Martigny by first train, half a day can be spent at any spot on the lake, and gay Geneva be reached by 7 P.M. The steamer leaves Bouveret, and hugs the right-hand shore the whole distance; but, Vevey passed, the fine scenery ceases.

(25 to 28.) *Geneva, Lyons, Paris,*

and home.—At Lyons, the *Nord* is very conveniently situated opposite the theatre in the Rue Lafont; but it is not cheap, and an eye should be kept on the bill. It is a gaunt, cheerless house, painted of a smoky gray colour—of course, as all *Hôtels du Nord* are; it is not possible to quote an exception to this mysterious law. At Paris, the *Hautes Alpes*, Rue Richelieu, suggested a most appropriate sleeping place after a Swiss tour, and was so.

In this little tour, country and town scenes were agreeably alternated. First came the Swiss lakes and mountains, then Milan and the softer beauty of the Italian lakes, afterwards the Mont Blanc district, lastly, Geneva, Lyons, and Paris. Such a diversity is very politic; it gives a constant zest to each phase. After continuing for a week amid attractions of a similar kind, one gets so abominably dainty and indifferent that beautiful views and places are hardly thought anything of. Were, now, the pretty lake of Thun, its blue-green waters washing the bases of mountains five or six thousand feet high, and of picturesque outline—the Niesen, Stockhorn, Blüme, and Rothhorn—were it in Belgium we should rave about it; were it in Yorkshire what a wonderful card it would be for the why-don't-you-see-your-own-country-first party to play! As it is, being already familiar with Lucerne and the snowy peaks of the Oberland, we walk by its shores and openly snub it, longing to set eyes on Como, the luxuriance of Italian vegetation, or Milan Cathedral. But only let us spend a week in the Lombard plains, and gasp about the hot streets of Milan, 'doing' nothing but churches and public buildings, and at last going into the cathedral only to get cool, then don't we begin to get tired of cities and to long for country freedom, and to be on the tramp again, enjoying mountain breezes and the fresh beauty of even such formerly despised lakes as that of Thun! Accordingly, therefore, 'the Tête Noire day,' or 'the Jardin day,' are looked forward to with increased pleasure.

EXPENSES.

	Franca.
<i>Rail.</i> —London to Lucerne	62.15
Arona to Milan	7.75
(<i>and Boat.</i>)—Milan to Bellaggio and back	9.40
Milan to Ivrea	8.85
(<i>and Boat.</i>)—Martigny to Geneva	5.35
Geneva, <i>viâ</i> Lyons, to London	66.55
<i>Boat.</i> —Lakes of Lucerne and Brienz	5.50
<i>Diligence.</i> —Turtmann to Brieg	3.
Crevola to Baveno	6.75
Orta to Arona	3.
Ivrea to Aosta	8.
<i>Living</i>	193.70
<i>Sundries.</i>	20.
<hr/>	
Total	Frs. 400.

On the road.—If men travelling together share common possessions (map, guide-book, &c.), let them agree ere starting for what each is responsible, and that if anything worth fetching be left behind, the caretaker alone returns for it. This plan saves many a ruffling of temper. As a rule, avoid short cuts; they are often treacherous, and generally yield bad going. Be early afoot, drink at the first spring, and get 6 or 8 miles done before breakfast. Pleasant pools wherein to enjoy a daily bathe—or, if needs be, to turn laundry-man—should be looked out for. Observe Murray's 'Precautions for Health.' Travelling often spoils clothes, yet too old ones should not be worn, else they will ever come to grief when least convenient. Brandy and tallow form a good remedy for chafed feet—a mishap of rare occurrence with properly fitting boots and (not unwontedly thick) socks. A plan of a city is indispensable.

At hotels.—Never make complaints of charges, &c., to a waiter—he has neither the power nor the interest to alter affairs; a temperate word with the landlord alone can, and probably will, set them straight. At the best hotels signify the style of bedroom wanted; at second-rate or doubtful ones, it is often wise to make a bargain. In our humble opinion, it is a great mistake to put one's self to the smallest inconvenience in order to be in time for a table d'hôte. Many persons—especially novices in continental

travel—believe greatly in tables d'hôte, thinking them 'quite the thing,' 'foreign,' and so on, and will ruthlessly cut up a day's work that they may be among the really 'first-class' company at those overrated feasts whereat cheerfulness is unknown. Better the dimer of herbs, with the friend of one's bosom or agreeable chance companions, where pleasant common converse is, than many courses eaten amid a medley of strangers, vulgar or uninteresting, pushing or freezingly reserved, silent or, worse, half-whispering. The charge for bougies is the one which pedestrians feel most inclined to resist.

'Sirs,' will a landlord cry, 'I know that though you honest scholars have a candle lighted outside your chamber doors, peradventure you blow it out the moment you are within, and are in bed and asleep long ere the yet unfilled wick hath ceased smouldering; nevertheless, an inn hath divers charges which must be borne, and these are set under the one word bougies.'

'Roundly put, good host; still, we pray you, rather stick these same charges more lustily into the great and prosperous of this world, and notably into Paterfamilias, already helpless, thanks to wife and daughters: in their presence he ever bleedeth well. But we humble brethren of the staff, already carrying soap, courteously entreat you not to "carry coals," if we, being palmers, carry candles also.'

SWEETER THAN TRUTH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'FESTUS.'

I.

AS I stood by the lakelet of love, to my view,
 'Mid the moon's fairy glow shone a soul-charming scene;
 The clouds were all silver, the skies were all blue,
 And the shores were all waving with woodlands of green.
 In a boat-shell of pearl sailed a maid and a youth,
 And the song that she sang sounded sweeter than truth;
 But the youth sat all silent; and soon from my sight,
 They sped through the gathering shadows of night.

II.

While I watched them departing, the waves seemed to sigh,
 And the faintest of halos encircled the moon;
 And though love-light the gale, ever feigning to die,
 There were signs of a change coming sudden and soon.
 But the skies were still beaming, the stars were still bright,
 And the lovers still steering their course of delight;
 When the sound of the song on mine ear died away,
 And the seal of sweet silence concluded the day.

III.

When the sun to its woes first awakened the world,
 What a scene! the tall forests lay prostrate and bare,
 While the love-freighted bark into fragments was hurled,
 And the youth and the maiden, alas! they were—where?
 'Gainst the tempest that raged they had struggled in vain,
 And the lake rolling wroth as the storm-stricken main;
 Then the voice that was silent had shrieked round the shore,
 And the song that seemed sweeter than truth was no more.

HOW SHE WAS DRESSED FOR THE BALL.

SHE stood in her touching loveliness,
 All dressed for the coming ball,
 With her pure white dress and pure white face
 Waiting for us in the hall.

A diamond star on her bosom lay,
 And starry gems were her eyes,
 Eyes knowing no shade of thought or care,
 Winsomely, sweetly unwise.

Roses glowed ardent red on her dress,
 Glowed ardent red on her lips;
 Roses fainted and drooped on her hair,
 And died on her finger-tips.

Gold clasped the marble curve of her arms,
 It wound round her throat so fair;
 It coaxing drooped from her pearly ears,
 And rippling gold was her hair.

I spoke to a friend who gazed with me,
 I uttered my rising fears:
 'Oh! woe, that Grief should that *flower-face fade*,
 And those star-eyes cloud in tears.'

'Your words are *men's* words,' the lady said;
 'You know not that Pain and Pride
 Are stronger than Joy, or Bloom, or Youth,
 Or Reason, or aught beside.

'She will look up, when her peace is fled,
 As peacefully sweet as now;
 Sobs in the heart send smiles to the lips;
 Oh! women alone know how.

'Pain shines like joy in the weary eyes,
 More brilliant than joy perchance;
 And it dyes the cheek and sharply spurs
 The tired feet in the dance.'

Then I cried, 'My darling must she bear
 The wearisome weight of care?
 If my arms are round her heart for aye,
 Will sorrow *still* enter there?'

She *must* bear her heartbreak all alone,
 But, oh! for thy darling's sake,
 Check the harsh thought—the word which, though light,
 Yet may a breaking heart break.

'Pity the sorrow that seemeth joy,
 And smiles that from pain are wrung;
 Pity all maskers, but, above all,
 Pity, oh! pity the young!

'They must tread erect a thorny road,
 In all the summer-tide heat,
 But silken robes will trail to the ground
 And hide the poor bleeding feet.

'God's tired children are everywhere,
 We dance with them at the ball:
 Be kind to the gay, and perchance thy balm
 On some wayworn soul shall fall.'

Down by James Oakley.

"Eyes glowed ardent red on her dress,
Glowed ardent red on her lips;
Eyes fainted and drooped on her hair,
And died on her finger-tips.

"Gold clasped the marble curve of her arms,
It wound round her throat so fair;
It cooing drooped from her pearly ears,
And rippling gold was her hair."

[See "How She was Dressed for the Ball."

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OUR PIC-NIC PARTY.

IT was on a lovely June afternoon that I first heard that a pic-nic loomed inevitably before me. I was slowly sauntering, cigar in mouth, round from the yard to the house, feeling considerably exhausted after a long drive, and enjoying that rarest of events in Ireland, a day without rain, when my reverie was interrupted by finding myself boisterously waylaid by my third daughter (aged nine), who informed me, quite out of breath, 'that we were all to go to *such* a grand pic-nic at Ravenshurst on the 25th.' This one leading fact at least I gathered with considerable trouble from a long rhapsody, joy having made the young lady curiously incoherent.

What a terrible fate it is to be a paterfamilias! Few are the roses, but many the thorns that adorn that unenviable situation. Reflections similar to the above, perhaps trite, yet nevertheless but too true, passed through my mind when, on reaching the house, I found that our neighbour Mrs. Groves (who had long been threatening some out-of-door festive gathering on a large scale) had called on my wife in the afternoon, and developed her plans on the subject. Ravenshurst, a large show place, its owner an absentee, was fixed on as the sphere of operations, as it possessed great natural beauties, which many people, not having before seen, might wish to explore.

Of course I need hardly say all my olive-branches were in ecstasies at the prospect of the pic-nic, which I, on my part, looked forward to with unmingled feelings of dismay; for I have come to that age at

which (with every well-regulated mind) I like to have my comforts about me when feeding. To eat off the ground after the manner of beasts, when it is possible to assert the proud privilege of civilized man and use a table, seems to me a strange, unaccountable, and most reprehensible caprice—only worthy of savages before the days of made dishes and knives and forks. But who can account for, much less control, the vagaries that we meet around us? Truly they must ever remain an unsoluble enigma; but while they exist—like all enigmas—they bore one immensely.

This, however, is a digression: we must return to 'our muttons,' the pic-nic. It was to be on a very large scale. All the county magnates within a circle of fifteen miles were expected to be present at it, and everyone was to invite a friend, or friends, and bring contributions of plate, delf, wine, and eatables. Of course it was to be wound up by a dance, either 'Au Clair de la Lune,' or in the deserted house at Ravenshurst, as best liked, that being the legitimate ending of all pic-nics. Such was the programme, and we had ten clear days before us in which to contemplate it from every point of view, and to collect friends to join us for it from every point of the compass, Mrs. Groves openly announcing that the more numerous our party the more welcome we would be.

The state of our house for those ten days was indeed terrible to contemplate. The Demon of Disorder revelled unopposed—one great pandemonium of confusion stretched

itself from kitchen to garret. Enissaries from Mrs. Groves haunted the passages; all outdoor work was at a standstill, every labourer in my employment being kidnapped and surreptitiously despatched with notes in every possible direction. I look into one room, only to find it occupied by my eldest son and daughter whirling about like dancing dervishes, and who become very savage at being surprised at their private rehearsal of a new mazurka. I look into another, and find a dressmaker closeted with my younger daughters and the governess, and the tables strewn with materials for some most elaborate toilette that is to dazzle us all when complete. In a third room I interrupt a council being held by my wife, the housekeeper, and the cook, to arrange an elaborate *menu*. Desperate, I rush to my own peculiar sanctum, only, worst of all, there to stumble over my schoolboy sons, who, with the rare audacity of their age, had actually taken up the carpet and piled the furniture to one side better to enjoy a game of marbles! Of course I drive them out, but the shock to my feelings is not so easily disposed of.

As the day draws near, it is repeatedly hinted by my wife in the abstract that late dinners are 'dreadfully inconvenient; they take up so much of the servants' time.' Finding me, however, singularly obtuse in applying any such vague generalities to this special case, she finally came to particulars by enunciating one day the sentiment of 'How nice it would be for us all to dine early with the children.'

'Far from nice, my dear, as far as I am concerned,' I hastened to observe; 'for such a measure would—first, establish a most dangerous precedent; and, secondly, cause entire derangement both of my digestive organs and temper—the latter already severely tried by this period of anarchy.'

'Surely, just for a few days, that sort of thing does not signify,' suggested my wife.

'On the contrary,' I replied, quoting the words of a great authority, 'it is the temporary nature of the infliction which renders it

unbearable. If it were to be for ever—hideous and tremendous thought!—one might perhaps in the end get used to it; or gracious Death, as is more probable, would sooner or later relieve me from my sufferings.'

I therefore stood firm in support of a great principle; and I am happy to be able to observe that late dinners continued in force till the eventful day of the pic-nic, a great triumph, which I have much pleasure in recording. The 25th June dawned upon us in unusual splendour. The previous fine days had to some degree dissipated my fears of getting lumbago from sitting on damp grass—by no means an unusual sequel to out-of-door fêtes in our lachrymose climate; but still, even when the weather is all that can be wished, I confess, for my part, that the equanimity necessary to insure digestion is quite overthrown by the vision of a great *coleopteron* in his 'best suit of black' on the tablecloth. I cannot consider curaçoa jelly improved by the unauthorized addenda of uncooked flies; nor would I give a farthing for the most exquisite *pâté de foie gras* that had served as a lounge for spiders. But the rage for out-of-door entertainments proves that I am before my age, and that my sentiments are not reciprocated by mankind at large.

From daydawn on the 25th all doubts as to the weather were dissipated by the 'Jubilate' sung by a chorus of children on the stairs just outside my bedroom door. Clappings of doors, charges down the stairs after the manner of cavalry, and shouts of joy in every different major key occupied the time, I hope, to them pleasantly, till breakfast, certainly not so to me, sleep being out of the question. Feeling much as I should imagine a lioness must when rifled of her young, at having the sweetest hours of repose forcibly snatched from me, I went down to breakfast, still in wonderfully good humour considering the circumstances, but very nearly lost my equilibrium when requested 'to help to pack up provisions, and not mind breakfast.'

That suggestion, I need hardly say, I did not act on, in spite of the observations of one of my daughters, a pert minx, who, presuming on the fact that she is supposed to be my favourite, made her own reflections on my conduct, and dropped something to the effect (in the inconvenient way that children do) that 'Papa had told her yesterday that we were always to have "Duty first and pleasure afterwards." ' My duty here was plain enough, namely, to give Miss Pert a quietus, which, having most effectually done, I sat down to table a little ruffled; but a thoroughly successful *vol-au-vent* restored my equanimity, and I felt again as it is my nature to be—full of amiability to mankind in general, and to my own family in particular.

Ravenshurst being fully ten miles distant, it was arranged we were to start at 11 A.M., and when that hour arrived we mustered pretty numerously, as eight of my children were to accompany us, and our party also included two college friends of my eldest son's, my old friend Archdeacon Leigh, and his daughter. How to pack in and on the vehicles that were to convey us to Ravenshurst was now the difficulty, they not being made of elastic materials nor we of compressible. To make two carriages, one intended by the builder to hold four persons, the other eight, suddenly stretch to accommodate fifteen individuals, was a problem which taxed our ingenuity considerably; but we solved it. The solution became an accomplished fact, though necessarily a work of time; and I need hardly say that we covered ourselves with glory thereby.

I had sent in time to secure post-horses for the large carriage from a neighbouring town, but on seeing the feeble way in which the animated bundles of bones, by courtesy called posters (only kept apparently together by the harness, which braced them up in some miraculous way), dragged the barouche to the door, I could not avoid a gloomy misgiving that the horses would drop to pieces from pure inanition before reaching Ravenshurst, leaving

the postboy to mourn over their fragments. No such fears, however, seemed to cross his breast, for he sat his Rosinante with as jaunty an air as if it were a three hundred guinea hunter, and seemed amazed when I asked if he thought 'those wretched animals would ever drag us to Ravenshurst?'

'To Ravenshurst, is it, yer honour? 'Deed will they. Bedad it's they that *can* go whin they're warm! Maybe it's in Dublin yer honour 'll find yourself afore they stop.'

This was hardly consolatory, for it suggested the idea that they would bolt with us *nolens volens* in exactly the opposite direction to which we wanted to go. It would be an unfortunate climax if, like the notorious horse in the story-book, 'they could only go on the Dublin road, but then went like blazes.' We could only console ourselves by the hope that their will might surpass their powers, which seemed at least probable.

The phaeton now took the lead, as it was supposed that 'a carriage in front' would act beneficially on our horses; and in time a start was accomplished, after the following fashion: First of all, each wheel was seized by some half-dozen men, who were each to pull in concert, and thus set the machine in motion—that apparently being quite beyond the horses' power, which struck me as ominous of evil. However, once shoved off, all was to go on prosperously. Unfortunately for the success of the experiment, the men did not pull in concert; so everything went wrong. It was a long time before we apparently realized the horses' idea of what a start should be; but finally, after many failures, a sudden scramble, a floundering, and shouts of triumph from the bystanders proclaimed the fact that we were off. Loud exhortations of 'Keep 'em going, Pat—keep 'em going!' were responded to by our Jehu by, 'Sorrow a stop in 'em once they're off, barrin' the harness breaks!' a contingency quite on the cards, or, rather, certain to happen, the elaborate arrangement of leather, twine, and rope being evidently more curious than stable.

I need hardly attempt to describe the scenery between our place and Ravenshurst, as it is dreary in the extreme. The wretched husbandry stamps the small fields with a character quite their own; and the prodigies Ingenuity (who reigns with undisputed sway) has accomplished in the ridges and furrows must be seen to be appreciated. Their singularly complex arrangements are suggestive of nothing but rams' horns, each wildly pursuing its own zig-zag course, in most curiously independent fashion. Pasture fields, so called, though minus the grass, were numerous, through which a few poverty-stricken cows were to be seen disconsolately wandering, with an air of placid resignation quite touching to see. But the costume of the peasants was what particularly tickled the fancy of our English friends. It has been justly observed that the Irishman alone, of all nations, works out in the fields in a ball-dress and court costume; and of the truth of the saying we had ample proof during our drive. Grandeur in decay is the characteristic of the labourer's toilet. A black or blue tail-coat, of superfine cloth—apparently a family relic, as it has never any pretension to fit the wearer (indeed, the tails sometimes reach the ankles)—but alas! out at elbows, clothes the upper half of the figure. Black cloth 'pants,' rather dilapidated, it is true, but still with remains of former chaste magnificence, or shorts and stockings, are *de rigueur* for the legs. But the crowning glory is the hat, which, sternly uncompromising in its adherence to the chimney-pot shape, still allows the Irish idiosyncrasy to crop out in the probable absence of a crown, which, if present, is generally attached to the walls of the hat by ropy twine. The costume, as a whole, most people might imagine to be inconvenient, but facts apparently prove the reverse. The effect is undoubtedly peculiar to strangers; for the rakish, *degagé* mixture of negligence and fashion, when combined, forms a unique whole, quite indescribable by pen and ink.

As we came to within about four

miles from Ravenshurst, our progress, flickering at all times, became feebler and feebler. Entreaty and coercion seemed equally ineffectual on our wretched cattle, which at last stopped, apparently for good, utterly prostrated, at the foot of a hill. We all agreed to get out of the carriage; and now ensued a series of strategic wiles, on the part of our postilion, wonderful to see. His grand object seemed to be to endeavour to delude the horse he had been riding (which, it appeared, was the delinquent) into the idea that he was now going home. With this view he unharnessed both horses, and with some difficulty turned the carriage on to a bye-road, striking off at right angles to the one we were on, but which rejoined it some two miles further on. This arrangement being all completed, the horses were again put to, and great results expected. But alas! alas! even the best-conceived human devices are liable to fail. Whatever hopes our Jehu may have cherished as to the success of his stratagem proved miserably delusive, for, with an ominous shake of the head, the unfortunate brute refused, point blank, to stir.

'Musha, thin!' said Pat, desperately, driven to the end of his resources, apostrophizing the refractory animal in tones vibrating between anger and admiration, 'Musha, thin, ye thief of the world! But ye're wary! Divil a one could get a rise out of ye!'

But, however comforting it might be to Pat to discover that the horse was possessed of a supernatural stock of 'cuteness,' it entirely failed to console us for being stranded on the roadside, four miles from our destination, which we were not the least likely to reach except on foot. To tramp, hot, dusty, and flushed, into the presence of all the rank and fashion at Ravenshurst was a terrible climax to contemplate; besides which a long walk of four Irish miles, in a glowing sun, would inevitably knock up the younger children. We were debating what was best to be done, when a friendly countryman volunteered the information that there was another horse within reach. It had been seen

going into a forge not far off some time before, and perhaps it was still there. Great excitement at once prevailed, and a deputation was despatched in search of it, and soon returned escorting an enormous quadruped with the most extraordinary combination of diseases on its legs that ever horse was doomed to bear.

The nearer and nearer he shambled up, the fainter and fainter grew the prospect of his dragging us to Ravenshurst, until on a close inspection my hopes sunk to zero. However, he was hitched on as unicorn, and our driver, who took a decidedly cheery view of affairs, promised great results.

'Billy,' however, as they called him, proved unequal to the emergency, and to the Herculean feat of dragging two refractory horses on against their will; so that plan had to be relinquished. With ever-ready resource, however, the postilion now proposed to attach the redoubtable Billy to the carriage in the place of the horse he had ridden, 'the bay mare bein' willin' to go and welcome, if that thunderin' villain,' shaking his whip at the saddle horse, 'would only let her.' The bay mare, however, on trial quite belied her character, for she greeted the approach of the stranger with a series of kicks and screams, anything but welcome to the harnessers, though they seemed to afford much gratification to her owner, who gloried in the agreeable surprise of finding 'that she had a kick left in her, when he thought she was done.' This plan also proving a failure, it was finally determined that the archdeacon and my second son should make the best of their way to Ravenshurst, and send our own horses back from thence to fetch the carriage and the rest of the party.

Innumerable offers of 'guides' now poured in from all directions.

'I'll show yer honour a pad, jist forenenst yees, that'll take yees out convanient to the big house,' volunteered a ragged urchin of unknown sex.

'Whisht, thin, Marget, ye're very forward entirely, disturbin' the gen-

tlemen,' interposed a tall lad, in the usual blue dress-coat and gorgeous gilt buttons, but who, as a counterpoise to its splendour, wore a straw rope twined round his legs as 'continuations' — 'I'm the boy, yer riverence,' he continued, making an elaborate bow and curtsy all in one to the archdeacon, 'that sarves the clargy always; sure I'm Father Phil's gossoon.'*

'He's but a donny crathur, yer riverence—never heed him,' contemptuously broke in an elderly female, in a blue cloth cloak. 'Be off, all of yees!' she continued, in a tone of authority; 'sure the quality's considerin' what they'll do. A poor widowed crathur, yer ladyship,' she continued in an undertone, turning to my wife, 'strivin' and strooglin' all she can to keep the little family. Musha, thin! but that's the darlin' child!'

This sudden diversion was a dexterous appeal (and not in vain) to maternal pride, as her last hope for obtaining a donation, armed with which she soon after retired from the scene, having first offered us a large stock of blessings not in her power to bestow. The archdeacon and my son now set off together to Ravenshurst—the former, however, altogether declining to avail himself of the services of 'Father Phil's gossoon,' determined to keep to the public road, on the principle that the longest way round is generally the shortest way in the end. We remained to guard our possessions; the horses were again unharnessed, and allowed to graze on the roadside at their own sweet wills; the postilion had recourse to his pipe, and so ended scene the first.

Two hours passed by, in which time we had reckoned our messengers might have about made Ravenshurst, when I was awakened from my siesta in the carriage by the tramp of coming horses, which, to our agreeable surprise, we recognized as our own. It appeared that about an hour after leaving us, the archdeacon and my son had been overtaken by the carriage of one of our neighbours, who, having a couple of vacant seats in it, took

* *Anglicè*, lad or factotum.

them up; which accounted for our speedy relief—a fortunate circumstance, as I found that the children, having become clamorous for food, had been detected by the governess in an insidious attack on one of the provision hampers, and had had to be bribed by biscuits, cautiously doled out at intervals, to keep their appetites in check. This state of things was now fortunately at an end, and we reached Ravenshurst soon after three o'clock, to find preparations for dinner nearly complete.

The scene, as we drove up to the house, was a very gay one; picturesque groups were scattered on all sides. The house itself has no beauty to boast of. A square, detached, red-brick edifice, with stone copings, it flaunted glaringly in the sun, and looked thoroughly uncomfortable, as, surrounded by its area, it presented no mode of in- or egress but by the hall-door. Its situation, however, is excellent, for, from its position on a hill, it stands in proud contemplation of the splendid demesne below and around it, adorned by fine old timber, above which, on the left, could be seen the spire of the church of the neighbouring town. On the right the ground slopes suddenly down to the lakes, of which only glimpses can be seen through the branches of the intervening trees. Opposite the hall-door the ground rises in a steep slope, and the view from the top of this knoll is celebrated for its beauty through many neighbouring counties.

Immediately on our arrival, our hampers were seized by Mrs. Groves' army of retainers, and she herself met us on the steps, condoled with us on our misfortunes, and finally brought us into the hall, the chairs and benches in which did much credit to her foresight. The doors of all the rooms being stretched invitingly open, we soon made a voyage of discovery through them in search of some paintings of which we had often heard, and which, being on panels, had escaped the dispersion that had been the fate of their companions. The paintings were three in number, all in the

same room. One, by an old master, representing Dido after the desertion of Eneas, occupied nearly the whole end wall; the other two, opposite the windows, were full-length portraits of the last Lord and Lady Ravenshurst, on whose death, without issue, the title became extinct.

The pictures are all good, and terribly out of place. The archdeacon, who is an authority on the subject of paintings, was in the middle of a long discussion as to the genuineness of the 'Dido,' when we were summoned to dinner, which we found laid out on a series of tablecloths under the trees to the left of the house. The incongruity of a meal prepared after the manner of the nineteenth century, to be eaten reclining after the manner of the ancients, was very striking, but it had at least the one merit of furnishing a picturesque *coup d'œil*. It was pretty to see the sun's rays chasing each other through the interstices of the arching branches which form a Gothic roof overhead, and peeping curiously at intervals through the interlaced fretwork to gain a glimpse of the spectacle beneath; but still prettier to a practical man was the tempting array of eatables spread out before him. If they had only been on a table! but there was no use in giving way to vain regrets, so with a sigh I seated myself *à la Turque*, on a very gorgeous railway rug, and prepared to make the best of affairs. Hardly had we seated ourselves, however, before we discovered that a host of marauders, in the shape of gnats, had taken forcible possession of our dining-hall, and were prepared to do battle with peculiar ferocity with all who came within their reach. They made such a furious onslaught on us, that, considering prudence the better part of valour, we beat a retreat, the archdeacon, to cover our flight, taking the high ground, that 'he could not reconcile it to his conscience to allow the midges to deprive the worms of their due.' We constituted the hall our dining-room, an impromptu cellar was formed under a chair, and a chain of satellites kept us supplied with necessities in the shape of eatables.

During our repast, which was unfortunately of an intermittent character, we adjourned to the windows of an adjoining room to watch the battle still waging with great fury between the midges and our friends for the possession of the viands. One elderly gentleman was particularly noticeable for his untiring zeal, and appeared to be a most undaunted belligerent. His head he had enveloped on scientific principles with a yellow bandanna handkerchief, the storming of which redoubt must have presented enormous difficulties. His right hand vigorously and unceasingly wielded a branch of horse-chestnut, with which flapper he laid about him right and left, and must have slaughtered thousands of his aggressors. As his left hand was his only dependence for obtaining food, his meal must have been swallowed under difficulties, but his sleight of hand seemed prodigious.

As to the unfortunate handsomen (we had two military, or rather militia bands in attendance), they must have had a dreadful time of it, enduring all the pangs of being devoured alive, necessarily passive in their torturers' hands, while pouring forth their floods of harmony.

After dinner, my eldest daughter insisted that I was to take our friends the Leighs to the top of the eminence opposite the house, and show them all the 'lions' to be seen from thence. In vain I pleaded, first, that I really could not climb hills after dinner; next, that my knowledge of localities was muddled in the extreme; the young lady was resolute, and I had, as usual, at last to acquiesce; for what is a paterfamilias but a slave to the caprices of those most pitiless of tyrants—his own children? How every day one more and more regrets the thoroughly false step of having brought them into the world!

Up the hill we therefore toiled. I tried to console myself by the consciousness that at least I was getting up in the world, which, with a large family, was a comfortable reflection, and in time we reached the top. A glorious panorama certainly lay stretched before us; whether it repaid the toil, however, was to my

mind doubtful. Grace Leigh considered it would have sufficiently rewarded a climb of any length; but then, as I remarked to her, it makes a vast difference in one's sensations to be only seventeen, and accustomed to early dinners.

Having done the view, we returned to the house, and my friend Groves at once pounced on us to complete a boat's crew, and we wended our way down to the lake. Here we found a crowd gathered round my fourth son, who had, it appeared, signalized himself by falling into the water. Fortunately, his eldest brother, who was by, did the next best thing—namely, pulled him out again, getting tolerably wet and intolerably cross in accomplishing it. As to the little fellow, he perfectly carried out the idea of a river god. Water dripped down his sleeves and from his white trousers in a regular cascade.

'How could you manage to do such a stupid thing, Charley?' I could not help saying.

'How was I to help it, papa?' answered my young gentleman in a very aggrieved tone; 'of course the ducks took the water the moment they got a chance.'

'And if you were so well acquainted with their idiosyncrasy,' I broke in, sternly reproving his levity, 'you were thoroughly inexcusable for giving them the chance;' having administered which rebuke, I made him at once come with me to the house to get his clothes dry. I need not dwell on his mother's consternation; fortunately, a fire in the caretaker's kitchen promised in time to repair the mischief; but the problem of what to wear in the interval was not so easily solved, it not being the way, at least in my family, to bring changes of raiment on a morning drive. At first we thought of sending him into retirement behind an open umbrella in a light and airy costume, compounded of his mother's lace shawl and our combined pocket-handkerchiefs; but a happy inspiration suggested the idea of a railway rug, swathed in which, like a mummy, I finally left him in his mother's charge, and myself returned to the lake for a row.

Here I stumbled on young Marsden, one of my son's English friends, and we started together in a boat for a pull across to Darlington, a demesne on the opposite side of the lake, which is the boundary between Ravenshurst and Darlington, and common property to both places. We could not help regretting, as we rowed along, that the two demesnes were not in the hands of one proprietor, as their junction would constitute one of the finest residences in Ireland. Darlington lies low, and has not the same natural advantages in the lie of the ground as Ravenshurst; but can boast of a very ornamental Elizabethan mansion, which, surmounting a terrace garden, faces the lake, as if, like most beauties, it loved to gaze on the fair reflection of its charms in the glassy mirror before it.

We landed near the house, and came across a very urbane gardener, who took us through the terraces, and from whom we gained many new ideas on the subject of French pronunciation. Here we wiled away some time pleasantly enough; and afterwards took to the boat again, bent on an exploring expedition towards the head of the lake.

It was fortunate that our zeal for lionizing led us to this unfrequented part of the lake, for otherwise the pic-nic might have ended disastrously for one of my unlucky children. As we pulled slowly along—for the sun was still hot, in spite of the lengthening shadows—Marsden turned round to look at the view behind us, and called my attention to a boat far away near some reeds.

'Perhaps they intend those eccentric proceedings with a handkerchief for a signal of distress,' he continued: 'I think we might as well go and see what they are doing in the bulrushes.'

We accordingly altered our course, and my amazement is not to be told at discovering, on a near approach, in the heroine of the handkerchief, my second daughter—a young lady, hardly half way through her 'teens,' who had apparently constituted herself chaperon to a little girl of seven or eight, her sole companion in misery. The latter had apparently

altogether collapsed when their boat stuck fast on a mudbank, for on our arrival she was in floods of tears, and apparently doing her best to emulate the historic child

'Whose tears ran down so fast,
'They formed a little pond at last.'

We arrived before the operation was complete, but a promising pond had begun. It appeared that they had originally formed part of a largeish party, the other members of which had landed to look for ferns in a morass—of all places in the world, certainly, the least likely to find them. My daughter having slightly hurt her foot, remained in the boat, little Annie Graham with her. Very foolishly, she allowed the child to show her prowess with the oars, the result of which was—they were most successfully dropped overboard, and the current quickly drifted the boat on to a mudbank, where, hidden from the shore by a long stretch of reeds, and far enough to be out of hearing, the young ladies had the pleasant prospect of spending an indefinite period of remorse and terror. Fortunately, our opportune arrival released them from their unenviable position, where they already represented themselves as having spent 'hours.' We coasted about for some time for the chance of seeing the rest of the party, but finding no signs of them, we supposed they were engulfed in the morass, and we finally rowed back to Ravenshurst, where we found tea and coffee (a thoughtful provision of Mrs. Groves') in active progress, and those who did not intend to stay for the dancing making preparations for departure. Amongst these were my wife, the archdeacon, and my younger children, whom, after several failures, I at last succeeded in packing into the phaeton. Horses of not quite so decrepit a nature as our former posters we had fortunately been able to procure in the neighbouring town, so that the chances were in favour of the first detachment of our party reaching home safely. I was myself doomed to remain at Ravenshurst in order to spread an *argis* of protection over the rest of

our party, which was to follow in a few hours.

Those few hours, whatever they may have proved to my flock, were not the pleasantest to me. Standing, I know, by bitter experience, to be infinitely fatiguing; and my dancing days are, alas! among the things of the past; but the many silent martyrdoms endured by a *paterfamilias*, who can tell? None but the patient sufferer himself, and those who are included in the same terrible category of victims.

As dusk was fading into darkness, I saw a party of persons slowly approaching the house. Painfully they toiled along, travel-stained and weary. These were those whom we supposed peacefully sleeping in the morass, and still, perhaps, in their dreams seeking those valued ferns that ever, Will o' the wisp like, receded further from their grasp. Their adventures by flood and field were too numerous to be recorded here: missing the boat, they had necessarily been doomed to a steeple-chase walk across country—through swamps, woods, and bogs. That they had at last reached a haven of refuge seemed to them the only drop of consolation in the bitter cup of their sufferings, though it was unanimously decreed by the rest of the company that they had not done at all the right thing in coming to life again: they had been comfortably settled for life at the bottom of the bog—their requiem sung, their friends consoled with, and now they had deranged the whole programme by turning resurrectionists upon our

hands! It was really too inconsiderate. They, on their side, considered the abstraction of the boat unpardonable and unfeeling in the extreme, and poured out vial after vial of wrath on my unfortunate daughter, without in the least compassionating her sufferings in mind when stranded on the mudbank. Their expedition could hardly in any way be termed a success, for the ferns obtained at such cost turned out to be *mas* and *famina* growing in profusion a hundred yards from the house, and nearly as common as grass, at which, I am sorry to say, my daughter rejoiced. Truly, human nature is but selfish after all.

At about ten, supper appeared, artistically formed from the *débris* of dinner, which rose, phoenix-like, from its ashes. Endowed with fresh vigour by supper, I took advantage of the access of energy to have the carriage brought to the door, and carried off my reluctant crew amidst a wail of regrets at our leaving and aspirations for our safe progress homeward. We did reach home in safety—an event I congratulated myself strongly on next day, when, condoling with our coachman on his being headachey, prostrated, and generally 'seedy,' he informed me, in a moment of confidence, that 'the champagne at Ravenshurst had disagreed with him; it was very inferior, not at all what he was used to.' The heathen had been actually, in these enlightened days, sacrificing to the pagan god, Bacchus! Of course I could have no further sympathy with his ailments.

O.



THE FANCY FAIR AT KENSINGTON.

THERE are certain questions of social interest concerning which the world's opinion will be for ever divided. Whether the miser or the prodigal is most to be reprehended; whether port or claret is the healthier beverage; whether we ought to marry on 300*l.* a year or wait until we have doubled that modest income; whether tobacco is a harmless sedative or a dangerous narcotic; whether Monsieur Blondin is a hero or a fool; whether we ought to light up our dining-rooms with gas or colza oil; whether it is Mrs. Brown who provokes her husband or Mr. Brown who aggravates the partner of his choice, and thus becomes the cause of those unhappy dissensions: these are points, I say, upon which there will always be diversity of sentiment.

Similarly, and to the end of time, you will find conflicting theories about the administration of charity. If A. gives forty-two sixpences to blind beggars in the course of the year, B., who subscribes to an Eye Infirmary, calls him a deluded man for his pains. B., on the other hand, whose guinea may certainly be taxed by Boards and Committees before it reaches the objects of his benevolence, becomes a subject for ridicule to A., who tells him that he can never say in what way his money has been spent. There are many good, generous-hearted people who object to any but the directest form of alms-giving, who set their faces against Charity Balls, Fancy Fêtes and Fairs in aid of the sick or uneducated poor, as incompatible with the purity and unselfishness of real benevolence. They hold, and perhaps rightly, that the sympathy which manifests itself in this form is not of the highest order; that we ought not to degrade a Christian virtue into a mere excuse for merry-making. But these moralists, who, no doubt, have a deal of truth on their side, must bear in mind that it is better for public charity to flow through such channels as these than not to flow at all. In these matters we must take the world as

we find it. It has long been proved that people will throw away money at a bazaar, which they would never think of bestowing on the object for which that bazaar is held, unless they had entered it and been pleasantly cozened into generosity. The means adopted may not be all that we could wish; but the result obtained is such as may fully justify the means.

Therefore, I say, all credit to the originators and promoters of, and zealous workers in the late Fair held in the Exhibition building in behalf of the Putney Hospital for Incurables. Few of us whom the clanging bells tolled out on the last day of the International show thought that we should revisit the 'Fowkes pallis' (as our continental friends called it) under such circumstances. Contrary to one's expectations, the bare interior does not look so large as when filled. This fact is probably owing to the absence of proportional *scale* which the fittings of the various courts and departments gave it last year. On the occasion of the fête about half the length of the nave was devoted to stalls, at least if one can so designate those elegant little *boudoirs*, roofed with pink and white muslin, which cast down the most bewitching tints on the fair *filles de boutique* below. Every counter was piled high with that wonderful conglomeration of useless prettinesses that one never sees but at a fancy fair. How much Berlin wool, how much benevolence, how much crochet cotton, how much care, industry, patience had been bestowed on their manufacture, who shall say? Embroidered braces, braided slippers, smoking-caps of *applique* work, particoloured pen-wipers and pincushions, scented sachets for pocket-handkerchiefs, dolls dressed in the latest fashions of babydom, caps trimmed with the most approved colours, ottoman covers, scent-bottles, toilette bags, book-markers, old engravings, modern crockery, Parian shepherdesses half buried under a *débris* of milli-

nery, plaster cupids hovering over little hills of *bric à brac*—the whole looked like a vast conscription from the German Fair, the Soho Bazaar, and the Oxford Street Pantheon—a perfect Loan Museum of fashionable knickknacks put up for sale, and presided over by some of the noblest and the prettiest of Englishwomen that ever stood behind a stall. The great Napoleon called us scornfully a nation of shopkeepers, and I think the ingenuity and zeal displayed by these fair merchants in the sale of their wares bears no unpleasant witness to the libel. Not content with using all their fascinations to induce a ready purchase at the counters, they craftily employed some equally-alluring agent to tout for them all round. The moment I entered the building I was set upon by two irresistible travellers for the House of Lady — and Co., who not only freely offered samples of their goods for my approval, but insisted on my paying for them there and then. Eighteenpence for a single rosebud was not bad to begin with, nor should I have complained at this moment if I had received change for my half-crown, which, strange to say, these young ladies totally forgot to render.

There is something very charming in what old ladies call the *laissez-aller* of these proceedings. In accordance with the admirable rules of English society a young lady may be sitting half the evening next to me at a friend's house; but though she knows who I am and all about me, she would naturally feel indignant if I remarked that the weather had been fine without an introduction. As for taking the initiative by addressing me herself, I really believe she would as soon appear without her crinoline as do it. But here a sort of poetical licence is granted. Mrs. Grundy issues her plenary indulgence, and we throw away our notions of propriety. What would the great author of the 'Hints on Etiquette' feel if he saw a dozen of his most hopeful pupils betwixt the ages of sixteen and twenty gadding familiarly about, addressing whom they please, soliciting half-crowns of

strangers with the most unblushing and bewitching effrontery, and actually omitting to give change?

'Oh, would you allow me to put your name down for this five-shilling raffle?' asks one. 'Will you take a few tickets to see the Guards' Ball Room? only a shilling each!' says another. 'May I ask you to take your chance in the Magic Pie?' cried a third. 'Remember, there are *no blanks*.' (No blanks, indeed, except upon the features of those who pay a crown for a sixpenny match-box!) Of course I am let in for all these investments. I go to see the Guards' ball-room because, I suppose, *she* was there on that eventful night. I put in for the 'magic pie' to prevent any unfeeling jokes about my being *crusty* in refusing. I take a share in the five-shilling raffle because—because, upon my word, I cannot help it. Then I replace my purse with a determined air, and resolutely walk on.

There is a good sprinkling of aristocracy among the stalls, and those of the *profanum vulgus* who like to feast their eyes upon a titled personage have ample scope for this amusement. I also pause before a certain counter, but with another object. In front of it there is a little crowd murmuring their admiration in unmeasured terms. Their honest praise is not bestowed upon the glittering merchandise, but on the sweet vendors of those pretty trinkets. What have we seen within the building to compare with *them*? What grace! what features! what complexion! what lovely hazel eyes! what soft, rich, auburn hair, and delicately-modelled lips! what tender music in their voices! what pleasant, winning ways!—ah! *caveat emptor*. He was a lucky fellow who left *that* stall before he lost his heart or spent a guinea!

A little further on the piping bullfinch held his levée; a gentleman usher, whose hat was stuck all over with tickets, loudly proclaiming its merits, and inviting an inspection. Here an old party walks about with a dubious *chef-d'œuvre* of some unknown limner under his arm, soliciting subscriptions for a lottery;

there a youthful but reverend divine is putting up a cameo for sale. Little damsels who have not yet attained to the dignity of long dresses, and whose crinoline gives them the general effect of animated pen-wipers, rush enthusiastically about, selling sixpenny German toys at the moderate profit of three hundred per cent. I saw one of these infantile hucksters tugging at the coat-tail of a tall, grey-headed officer, who turned round gently, and laid his trembling hand upon her head.

'What do you want, my dear?' said the gallant gentleman, stooping down to his pursuer, who was but six years old.

'I want you to div me a shilling, please, for this geranium,' said the little maid, stoutly.

'And suppose I have only sixpence in my pocket, and give you that and a kiss: will that do?'

The youthful florist hesitated, and then ran off to consult her mother, who was sitting near. Presently she came trotting back. 'Oh, pleath, ma says *that will make it eighteenpenth*,' lisped out the little rogue.

'Upon my word, I believe she is quite right!' said the veteran, laughing, as he slipped a florin into her tiny hand, and took out the change in another kiss.

At three o'clock the famed majolica fountain began to play, throwing up its crystal jets, and scattering perfume through the air. The people grouped about it, listening to the plashing of the water, and to the excellent military band which performed at the west end of the nave. This gave my friend, Mr. Wagsby, an excellent opportunity for his little joke about the music of the *two Coldstreams*, which indeed were both playing at the same time in liquid strains for our entertainment.

Another fountain, on a very tiny scale, was placed in the centre of the fair. This was decorated with flowers, and filled with rose-water or can de cologne. Attached to it was a little placard which announced that **SIXPENCE PER DIP** would be charged to those who wished to

moisten the corners of their handkerchiefs with scent.

By this time the throng between the two rows of stalls became very dense. The Countess of Westmoreland and Lady Louisa Moncrieffe were literally besieged by customers. There is no crowd so difficult to pass through as one composed of ladies, partly on account of the overwhelming obstacles which crinolines present when mutually entangled, and partly because the usual expedient of *elbowing* one's way is, of course, out of the question. Hopelessly encompassed by three formidable hoops, I was beginning to despair of further progress, when a little incident occurred which produced, in a double sense, the diversion of my neighbours. A female cry of 'Oh!' attracted our attention to a baby form which was uplifted high by stalwart arms above the multitude. 'Goodness gracious, there's been an ackthident!' said a youthful Guardsman close behind me, and several ladies made a rush to the spot. The object of their sympathy, however, turned out to be a remarkably fine doll, of almost natural dimensions, which an enthusiastic gentleman was desirous of putting up for raffle.

While we are laughing at this unintentional *ruse* the sound of pipes and drums, accompanied by the loud clanging of a bell, draws our attention to a motley train which is proceeding up the nave. It consists of the 'sensation' players of an amateur company dressed in the costumes of their several characters. First comes the 'heavy villain' in a fine, laced coat and ample, yellow boots, scowling malignantly beneath his spurious eyebrows. After him trips that universal favourite, the stage sailor, clad in white duck, with an open, blue collar, and a glazed hat cocked very far back on his head. Next in order is the heroine dressed in a semi-rococo fashion, and shaking her auburn (!) ringlets coquettishly at the crowd. Being about five feet ten in height, and proportionably muscular, this lady attracts great attention; and but for the

eccentric habit of slapping her companions familiarly on the shoulders, and evident partiality for bottled stout in private life, her conduct is such as to excite universal sympathy. Closely following the object of his dramatic affections stalks a heavy swell in scarlet and gold, with a flowing wig and elegant little corked moustaches. The languid sentiment which pervades the expression of this youth leaves us no doubt but that he is the 'rightful heir.' Smugglers and pirates with canvas skirts and long, black boots of the 'Will Watch' type bring up the rear, and, amidst the plaudits of the spectators, walk down the nave towards the eastern dome, where a terrific broad-sword combat ensues by way of earnest for sensation scenes hereafter. Presently they all return to their theatre, a very imposing-looking edifice at the other end of the building. There we find huge placards announcing that the pieces chosen for performance are

BRAGANZIO THE BRIGAND,

AND

THE PORT ADMIRAL.

The platform in front of the entrance, decorated with loyal flags and Union Jacks, is occupied by a most indefatigable clown, who unceasingly proclaims the merits of the company, the scenery, and dramas, and loudly invites the public to ascend and patronize the entertainment.

'Now then, be in time, be in time!' roars Mr. Merryman, with a great deal of energy, and no stops; 'be in ti-i-i-me, we're just a going to begin, so be in time! This is the original and gen-u-ine drayma which has no connection with any other establishment on the premises; be in time, be in time, be in ti-i-i-i-me. Walk up, ladies and gen'lemen, take your seats and witness the great sens-a-tion of the age. Five murders, thirteen sanguinary encounters, several horn-pipes, and as many ghosts as can be put in for the money; now's yer time, now's yer time. The fust and most inter-esting mur-der is just

about to commence; if you don't look sharp, you'll be too late to see it. Walk up, ladies, walk up; the rightful heir is going to come into his property, and will, in course, distribute largess among the audience; this is an opportunity which may not occur again—be in time, be in time, be in ti-i-i-me!'

While this eloquent exhortation is going on, a youth, dressed in rustic costume of the last century, rushes about with little books of the play, inveigling old ladies up the ladder, decoying stray loungers into joining the audience, holding forth the most specious promises of entertainment, and gammoning everybody all round. Partly in consequence of these solicitations, and partly induced by the magnificence of the *dramatis personæ*, who, grouped about the entrance, now keep up a running fire of badinage, the visitors crowd up the ladder, first by twos and threes, and then by dozens, till the theatre is filled. Meanwhile, Mr. Merryman has hit upon a new expedient for attracting attention. Armed with a huge lump of pipe-clay, he harangues the mob in the following strain.

'Walk up, walk up, ladies and gents, and see the wonderful process of enamelling. This is the only establishment where the principles of this extray-ordinary art are properly applied. The patent has been bought from Madame Rachel at an enor-mous cost. Walk up, walk up, ladies, and be made bee-youtiful for ever. Now's yer time, now's yer time. Sit down, sir, if you please.' Hereupon, seizing the doublet of some 'bravo,' not actually engaged upon the boards, our friend in motley thrusts him down upon a chair in front of the platform, and before he can say Jack Robinson, whitens his face all over, exclaiming, 'There you are, sir, there you are, that's yer sort; bee-youtiful for ever! Hurray!'

This process was repeated on several of the performers, to the infinite delight of the mob, who fairly roared with laughter as the gentlemen operated on retreated, one by one, with floury complexions. At last, I spring up the ladder—not to

be enamelled, but to see the play. A lady, officiating as money-taker, is enshrined in a little niche outside. I pay my florin and hasten to the pit. What the price of admission to the 'boxes' was, I cannot say; but inasmuch as the entire auditorium consisted of Windsor chairs, disposed in rows upon the floor, it required a very subtle imagination, and no little refinement of conscience, to say where boxes ended and pit began.

I have said that two dramas were alternately represented: viz., 'Braganzio, the Brigand,' and the 'Port Admiral; or, the Mysterious Mariner.' It was the latter which I had the good fortune to witness, and a very thrilling spectacle it was. As Mr. Bowles, the author, has modestly expressed a wish that any one understanding the plot should explain it to him, I shall endeavour to throw what light I can upon its conception. And first, I must premise that, notwithstanding the nautical character of the title, the entire action takes place in front of a cottage door. As for the Port Admiral, the cream of the joke is, that he does not appear upon the scene at all.

The curtain rises, then, upon 'Giles's cottage,' and Giles, himself, who, harassed by monetary difficulties, and an importunate landlord, is about to fly to 'distant climes,' when he is intercepted by the latter person (Lord Othemanor), who, after chaffing him first about his impecuniosity, and then about his bandy-legs, offers to let him off on condition that he will give him his only daughter (Syusan) in marriage. When the honest rustic has spurned this compromise with disgust, and retired, that damsel herself appears, receives the amatory overtures of his lordship in an equally disdainful manner, and informs him that her heart is already another's. Finding the young lady deaf to his entreaties, the wicked nobleman (whose conduct all through the piece is remarkable for its moral obliquity) resorts to violence, and an abduction is imminent, when William (the mysterious mariner) rushes in, snatches off the bandanna handkerchief, which

Lord Othemanor has thrown upon his sweetheart's head, and rescues her. As this 'situation' is remarkable for its dramatic effect and genuine pathos, I quote the text in illustration:—

William [with Syusan in his arms].

Look up, my own true love! 'Tis me—'tis I!
Never was helpless beauty in distress
Without a British tar to succour it.

Susan. My William!—thou! My own, my guiding William!

I knew I need but cry, and thou wouldst fly
From the far confines of the universe
To succour me.

Lord O. [who has been creeping round and examining William].

He's not so big as me [begins to tuck up his sleeves].

And so—[William looks round and kicks him].

Ha! ha! revenge! a blow! a blow!

I'll keep in sight, and hear what they may say.

[Exit Lord O. L.]

After a little spooning between the lovers, during which Lord O. returns and peeps in vindictively, William gives vent to his feelings in a hornpipe (splendidly executed by Mr. Bowles amid rapturous applause) and retires. Syusan then enters the cottage, and the stage is presently occupied by Lord Othemanor, disguised as a sailor, and accompanied by two smugglers, who first swear to do what he requires of them, and then hide themselves. The beauteous Syusan then appears at her bedroom window, and begins to warble. She is joined in the chorus by her aristocratic persecutor, who takes a mean advantage of his disguise to entice her down. She then is seized by the smugglers, but the ubiquitous William again appears, and engaging them all in a terrific broadsword encounter, leaves them for dead upon the stage, and rejoins his Syusan, who has meanwhile taken refuge in the cottage. Strange to say, his back has no sooner been turned than all the villains revive, and goodness knows what mischief might have ensued but for the arrival of Giles, who brings with him a large bundle of papers, to which is affixed the Port Admiral's seal, plainly proving that the owner of the handkerchief is the rightful heir. William (who it appears had been changed at his birth) here produces the bandanna as a proof. The

nobleman, however, claims the handkerchief as *his* property, and by this means nearly establishes his birth-right; but William, ever ready for an emergency, boldly meets the difficulty by stating the unlooked-for fact that he had been changed back again afterwards. This is regarded as conclusive. Virtue is rewarded on the old plan; the young couple are made happy, and the smugglers become tax-collectors out of pure spleen. Such are the simple elements of a plot in which our interest was sustained for fully twenty minutes. The acting of the 'heavy villain' (whose name I regret that I cannot record), and of Mr. Bowles, as the nautical gentleman, was perfect, and the curtain descended in a storm of approbation.

Mr. Burnand's circus was equally successful in its way—in fact, perhaps this performance drew fuller houses than the legitimate drama. The whole strength of the company, like that of the rival establishment, occasionally paraded the nave, and two monstrous-headed heralds, supporting a banner between them, announced the wonders of the show.

The latter amusements included the usual 'scenes of the circle' (supported by hobby-horses of tremendous spirit); a bull-fight, in which the quadruped, by a poetical (and classical) licence, appeared as *Minotaur*, the—

'Semibovamque virum, semivirumque bovem,'

of Ovid's verse, and made the best use of his horns on every possible occasion. Then there was the wonderful performing dog—a French poodle, whose hind-quarters were shaved as clean as your hand, which stood on any number of its legs except the proper complement; and finally stretched itself between two chairs to an extent which justified the belief that *gutta-percha* must have been incorporated with its constitution. Next appeared an amateur acrobat in fleshings and spangles, who went through his 'posturing' in a most creditable manner; made desperate efforts to sustain five oranges in the air with-

out the remotest chance of success; was always on the point of juggling with knives and never did it; heaped a tremendous pile of chairs together with the apparent intention of jumping over them, and abandoning the attempt just when his audience were on the tiptoe of expectation, retired with the air of a man who had achieved a success.

Afterwards came the modern Hercules, who lifted and threw about the most astoundingly heavy weights with the greatest ease, and would, I believe, have remained a hero to this moment, in the eyes of certain old ladies, if some one had not unfortunately chanced to sit down on one of the weights aforesaid (labelled about 400 lbs.), which immediately collapsed, and thus dispelled the illusion. Whether it was owing to this accident, or the general hilarity of the assembly, I cannot say; but when the dramatic *finale*, the 'Siege of Seringapatam,' took place, all the performers—both assailants and defenders—were so convulsed with laughter, that very little attention was paid to histrionic proprieties. And if the 'company' were amused, how much more was the audience? Everybody seemed to enjoy the fun; everybody loudly applauded the praiseworthy efforts of this little band in the cause of charity; every one went away amused, and in good temper; every one, I say; but was there really no exception? Yes, one. An unhappy little Frenchman—the very prototype of Leech's caricatures—with stubbled beard and extravagantly curved hat, had entered the arena, evidently under an impression that it was the English Franconi's, and of course, ignoring the end and object of the fête, was disgusted to find that he had to pay two shillings for such a frivolous entertainment.

'Magnifique! n'est ce pas, Monsieur?' said one of the company to him as he was leaving the tent.

'Sans doute—à l'ANGLAIS,' said Mossoo, as he clenched his little fists and went away in a rage.

But 'Mossoo' was decidedly in the minority.

C. L. E.

COUNTRY COUSINS.

A Town Story for Ober-line People.

'I know you, Clara Vere de Vere;
Of me you cannot win renown;
You thought to break a country heart
For pastime ere you went to town.'

'THIS is what comes of your father's going to shoot last autumn at Sunnymead!' said the fashionable Mrs. Huntington to her still more fashionable daughters, Claire and Agatha, as she perused with evident annoyance, a long letter 'from the country,' which had arrived by the morning post. 'Here are Mr. and Mrs. Woodbine, and the Miss Woodbines, and Master Woodbine, coming up to town, where they hope to see a great deal of us, and to be introduced by dear aunt Huntington, and their cousins Clarry and Aggy, into fashionable London society.'

'Oh! do they indeed?' said Miss Huntington, the 'Clarry' of the affectionate letter referred to; 'then I trust, mother, that you will give strict orders to the footman to deny us to the three fresh-coloured women in a hired brougham, who are likely to besiege the house at any hour of the day, during the coming week. Country cousins on the rampage, and bent upon *doing* town, during the month or three weeks they can afford themselves at the hotel; I know what that is, and what it will be, unless we put a decided damper on the dear gushing creatures from the first.'

'They are good-natured girls, too—my apple-blossoms,' said the more unsophisticated younger sister Agatha, called, in the family circle, Aggy; 'and the attentions of Master Woodbine, as mother now contemptuously calls him, did not appear altogether disagreeable to my grandiose sister Claire, when we were at Sunnymead for papa's shooting last year.'

'Oh, he was well enough *faute de mieux*, when we were vegetating down in the country,' was the reply; 'but I don't want him hanging about us in town, asking about everything and everybody, and in-

terfering with the men in our set.'

And in giving vent to these sentiments, Claire Huntington was not saying more or less than nine hundred and ninety-nine thorough-going London girls would have said under the same circumstances; viz., in the height of the London season, and with a hardly-won footing in an exclusive set.

A country cousin in the country, is, of course, a widely different personage from a country cousin in town; and the very flunkey who sneers at the cards as he takes them in, and remarks to the hall porter, that there is a 'ole pack,' and that 'country cousins always turn out (as mam'selle the French maid says) *tout la booteeke*,' knows that there is a difference.

The country cousins being uncomfortably conscious all the time that they are detected—or, as Lord Dundreary would have expressed it, 'knowing that he knows, that they know, that he knows;' and in spite of their natural self-respect, and their high standing in their own county, they sink at once into insignificance beneath that withering gaze.

Poor Mrs. Woodbine, when she did invade the Belgravian residence of her affectionate relatives, in the predicted hired brougham, with her two blooming daughters, *en suite*, prepared a gushing message, to be left for Mrs. Huntington, 'in case she should be out,' which was very unlikely, you know, after that long letter naming the very day and hour of their intended arrival at the Great Western Hotel. But the message died on her lips, in the majestic presence of the awe-inspiring flunkey; and as the brougham drove away, containing the bevy of country beauties (at which even a guardsman condescended to stare),

the honest country eyes cast a lingering and affectionate gaze at the house, and refused, in their own purity of purpose, to recognize, in the shadowy outline of a female form, the sylph-like figure of 'cousin Aggy,' who, at Sunnymead, had called her two young cousins by the most endearing and fond of pet names.

Had she not also condescended to appropriate Fanny's brown mare, and Magdalene's habit, and ridden to cover with Frank Woodbine and a troop of younger male cousins; while the 'dear good-natured darling apple-blossoms' gave up their favourite amusement without a murmur for their sake? Had not both sisters accompanied the said 'apple-blossoms' to a country ball, and monopolized with the sweetest of smiles all their most agreeable partners, on the auspicious occasion? Had they not, in every sense of the words, made themselves at home at pretty Sunnymead, and parted with a thousand embraces lavished on their less demonstrative cousins; and with the often-repeated sentence on their lips—'You must all come and see us in town. Positively you must!' And was it likely that eyes so honest, and hearts so true, as those possessed by the Woodbine cousins, should recognize a fair false form, in the figure which they had seen retreat from the window of the smart house in Belgravia?

Not in the least—it was their first season in town, and they returned to their hotel, hugging themselves in the belief that their aunt and cousins would appear *en masse* before long, with joyful welcome depicted in every feature, and take the country cousins to their hearts at once.

'It is curious, if we have missed on the road,' said Fanny Woodbine, who thought that she had kept a good look-out, and who had cast, on every carriage that passed, an anxious inquiring gaze—and 'Has any one called?' was the first inquiry made, when they returned to their hotel; their countenances betraying how deep was the disappointment, when an answer was received in the negative.

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'It really is very odd,' said Mrs. Woodbine, thoughtfully; 'I thought it would have given them such a pleasant surprise. I am glad now that we did not ask them to put us up, until we looked about for lodgings, as we thought of doing at first.'

'It's more than odd, it is tiresome,' remarked one of the girls; 'because we don't know where to get our bonnets, or to have our white silks made up, or anything: we want to see Claire and Aggy awfully.'

At this very moment the 'ole pack' of Woodbine cards were being delivered into Mrs. Huntington's hands; and she and her eldest daughter began an earnest consultation upon the best method of keeping their unwelcome cousins at arm's length—making up indeed, on the occasion, a long-established coolness relative to a milliner's bill, which had existed between mother and daughter, and which a less important discussion would have failed to remove. It required some diplomacy to shake off the intimacy established at Sunnymead, without forfeiting an invitation to that pleasant and, to them, inexpensive retreat during the autumn or winter months.

'We must have a fogie dinner-party,' was Claire's suggestion; 'we can ask them to that, and take them out shopping one day; and I really don't see anything more that we can do.'

'Well, I don't know what they might not expect,' said Mrs. Huntington; 'these country people are always so *exigeant* when they do come to town: and your father says that he won't have them snubbed, because he should lose his partridge-shooting, which does him so much good, and sets him up for the year.'

'That's just like papa,' was the amiable reply. 'Men are really too selfish: he wouldn't like to be bored with "the squire," or with young Frank all day himself.'

'No, of course not—one could hardly expect it. But a brilliant idea strikes me: let us give them our tickets for the next "Horticultural,"—they will take it kindly—

and you and Aggie don't want to go until the great one. I can send them at once.'

'Ain't you going to call on them, mother?' said Aggy: she had a lurking affection for these 'apple-blossoms,' and resolved to make a sort of stand in their defence.

'Oh, yes! some time during the week; but I want them to find out that they can't depend upon us. You would not like it, Aggy, if these "country cousins" came and cut you out in your own house? You and Claire are both looking rather the worse for wear already.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' laughed Aggy, mischievously. 'I should like to see Claire's face, if Charlie Longcheveux went on with the "apple-blossoms" after all. She would have to flirt with Frank in self-defence.'

'Don't be foolish, Aggy,' said Mrs. Huntington, who found a difficulty in impressing her youngest daughter with a due reverence for, and belief in, the deities of 'Vanity Fair.' 'I shall be very much annoyed if you are more than discreetly civil to these good people. I won't have them asked to tea; or do anything to put them on a familiar footing. It would only be uncomfortable for them, as they would not know a soul: they will soon find out that, in town, people go their own way; *and that country intimacies are out of the question here.*'

'Well, all I can say is, that when I ride to-morrow morning, I shall go and see our country cousins,' said Aggy, defiantly; and she kept her word.

'Where is aunt Huntington? where is uncle Charles? where is cousin Claire?' were the questions which greeted Aggy, as she entered the Woodbine apartments; and the ready wit of the town cousin forsook her for a moment, as she muttered with a shade of embarrassment, and something like a blush, 'They would have come, but they are not very well.'

'Not well!' said sympathizing Mrs. Woodbine, tenderly. 'I hope they are not sickening for the small-pox, or anything of that sort.'

This version of the matter amused Aggy so much that she burst out laughing, and answered, 'Oh dear, no; there's no fear of that; but the fact is, we have been out so much this season that we are awfully used up, all of us; but I was determined, for my part, to come and see you as soon as possible.'

'That's rather good,' broke in Frank. 'Why, my dear unsophisticated mother expected to find you here on our arrival: it would have made it so home-like, she said; so like Sunnymead, she meant, Aggy!' he added, mischievously, for he was something of a young cynic in his own way, and enjoyed a hit at what he thought the want of respect with which his mother had been treated.

'You know she is not too much "used up" to drive ten miles to the station to meet you, when you came there. And cousin Claire, what is the matter with her?'

Aggy began to wish that she had not come, and to agree with her mother and sister that it was absurd of people being so very cousinly in the mid-height of a London season; so she answered rather huffily, 'Oh, she's all right; but she would probably imagine, Frank, that it was your part to call upon her.'

'Admitted, willingly,' said Frank, (who was as handsome and far better bred than the fashionable guardsman, who allowed the attentions of the two 'Huntington girls' with such sweet condescension; observing to his new friends, that 'there was safety in a multitude.')—'Admitted, willingly; but how about my mother and the girls?'

'Oh, they must come and see us,' was the ready reply. 'Mamma no sooner heard of your arrival than she ordered the fatted calf to be killed at once.'

Oh, Aggy, did not conscience smite you as you said it; with regard to that fogie party, which was so unwillingly given in honour of the Woodbine invasion?—'You are all to come and meet some of the nicest people we know.'

'That reminds me, that the girls hope that their aunt will kindly take them out shopping; it is so

long since I have been in town, that I don't know the best places to go to.'

'I am sure that she will be delighted some day,' said cautious Aggy; 'she told me to say that she would have sent the carriage to take you out to-day, but that one of the carriage horses is hopelessly lame, and that we are obliged to job one, to papa's intense disgust; as Claire and I have to ride, which is not convenient for shopping.'

'Oh! I should like to have a ride in the Park!' said Fanny, enthusiastically: to which her cousin replied, 'Why don't you have your horses up from the country? the chesnut is neat enough in its way; but she made no offer of her own Arab steed, which stood pawing at the door of the hotel.'

'It's neater than that beast, at all events,' said Frank, who had been gazing at his cousin's horse with a critical eye. 'By Jove! it's not safe for you: look at its front legs.'

'Don't dare to abuse Ishmael, Frank, or we shall quarrel,' said Aggy, good-temperedly. 'He looks neat enough with me on him, I can tell you. But if you think him not safe I would not trust Fan on his back for worlds. Could not you get a hack or two, and ride in the Park some day?'

'I have no doubt that such animals could be procured for money,' said Frank, satirically; 'but I don't think that Fan cares sufficiently about London riding to spend her pocket-money in that way:' and rather uncomfortable under the conviction that the country cousin was learning to understand his fashionable relatives, and their intentions with regard to his family, Aggy Huntington prepared to lower her flag, and to beat a retreat before she had farther involved herself with the Woodbine family.

'Well! good-bye, dears,' she said in her off-hand way. 'You will hear from mother about dining with us: and remember, Frank, that Claire is expecting you to call upon her, before she feels it incumbent on her to remember your existence.'

'If that is not a cool thing, I don't know what is,' said that young man,

when he had returned from escorting his cousin to her horse. 'If I were you, mother, I would cut all these fine people dead.'

'It certainly is very odd,' said Mrs. Woodbine, unwilling to believe harm of any one: 'they were so very friendly and pleasant always at Sunnymead.'

'I suppose it is part of the hollowness of the world, which we were always hearing about, and were believing in,' said Magdalene, gravely. 'I wonder if the Elfintowers will be the same.'

Now the Elfintowers were the great people in the neighbourhood of Sunnymead Hall, and friendly relations were kept up between them and the Woodbine family; they were very great people, too, in the London world; and to be on intimate terms with the 'Elfintowers,' was a passport into any circle, however fastidious, or however exclusive. The Elfintowers were as far above that set, into which the Huntingtons had successfully struggled, as the set in the housekeeper's room are above those in the servants' hall; their prestige was forced and undeniable, and would receive an additional lustre from any accident of fortune or favour.

Lady Elfintower was one of those highly-bred women who are 'the same' to you at all times; vulgarity and forwardness were always odious in her eyes; and she would never have done herself the injustice to tolerate at one time what she would have despised at another. She liked the Woodbines in the country, and she was not likely to snub them in town.

'I shall ask those pretty girls here,' she said to her daughters, Lady Katherine and Lady Jane; 'they will be quite an attraction; and they are always ladylike and well dressed.'

If dear Mrs. Huntington could but have foreseen this! She would have given her year's pin-money to have done it; but no friendly clairvoyante informed her of the fact. Why, the most distant bow from Lady Elfintower would have made her blest in her own eyes, and in those of rival matrons, for the whole

season; and to have been asked to her house, would have stamped her for ever with the seal of the elect.

When the Huntington party had been staying at Sunnymead, in the autumn, the Elfintowers had been away from home; and the acquaintance which had been casually mentioned as existing between the families, had been believed by the town cousins to be merely one of those social myths, which they were in the habit of passing off as realities, with regard to themselves.

For instance, the young ladies would talk long and fluently to their cousins, about those among their acquaintance who moved in higher circles than themselves, as though they were on the most intimate terms imaginable; calling them by the familiar nicknames under which the finest young ladies are, in these days, often known to their fashionable acquaintance.

Trusting to this, poor Mrs. Woodbine had hoped great things for her daughters, and had innocently boasted to her country neighbours of the introductions which she hoped to obtain from this quarter, for Fanny and Magdalene, with the best London society, which, of course, as quiet country people, they could not otherwise have obtained. She did not understand, good honest soul, that a certain class of would-be fashionables cannot afford to know country nobodies in town, and that clinging on for the bare life to the slippery ranks of fashion, they are not likely to burden themselves with an extra weight or encumbrance in the ascent.

No sooner had Aggy cantered off, than they felt themselves 'adrift;' the pleasant day-dreams, in which the girls had indulged, of gaieties and social enjoyments in store for them, under the auspices of the cousins, in whose favour they had sacrificed so many of their own in the winter, vanished and melted into empty air. A tenderer dream, in which the heir of Sunnymead had indulged with regard to his cousin Claire, was also dispelled; and the Woodbine family began to think rather regretfully of their pleasant country home, of the green lanes,

and the fragrant hay-fields, and to vote London, in the season, a hot, unfriendly, busy wilderness of sight and sound, in the gaieties and amusements of which, they were not likely themselves to participate.

The 'squire,' however, who had, as Frank expressed it, 'come down very handsomely on the occasion,' and who was as proud of his two pretty daughters, and of his comely wife, as possible, did not allow their spirits to be long damped by the *contratemp*s with regard to the family of the Huntingtons.

'Hang all this nonsense!' he said, good-naturedly: 'what can prevent us from going to the play, or the opera? Not all the fine-lady airs in Christendom. What shall it be to-night, girls—Fechter, or the opera? I'm game for a box, and you shan't be disappointed of one or the other.'

'Oh! let us go to the "Duke's Motto," first, daddy;' they said altogether; 'we are dying to see Fechter, and mamma is so fond of the play.' And with sparkling eyes and blooming cheeks they rewarded their indulgent father with a kiss, for the bright idea which at once dissipated the gloom which Aggy's visit had shed over the family party.

To the 'Duke's Motto' they accordingly went; and the delights, the illusions, the intense enjoyment of the first play they had seen, made their bright, happy faces, a wonderful contrast to the jaded and pale ones, which the most masterly touches of the actor could only kindle into momentary excitement.

They had, indeed, gazed so eagerly on the stage, as not to be likely to recognize any acquaintances, either in the boxes or stalls; but after the first act, Frank, who had been sweeping the house with his opera-glass, to regale his eyes with some of the fabulous beauty, of which he had read and heard so much, suddenly exclaimed, 'Why, mother, Lady Elfintower and Lady Jane are in the box opposite, and they are bowing to you!'

'Well, it is really pleasant to see a face that one knows in this crowd of strangers,' said Mrs. Woodbine, thankfully; and she returned Lady Elfintower's bow with the simple

grace that was natural to her; for the Woodbines, with all their simplicity, were both well born and well bred, and no more capable of the meannesses of which the Huntingtons could be guilty, for the sake of a fashionable acquaintance, than of defrauding a tradesman or picking a pocket.

The two families met on the stairs as they were leaving the theatre, when Lady Elfintower ascertained where they were staying in town.

'I shall have the pleasure of calling on you to-morrow,' she said, smilingly, 'and if your daughters like to walk in the Park and see the Princess on horseback, I will take them with me; as I have promised Katherine and Jane that they shall go.'

'Oh! thank you very much,' said the girls, blushing with the intensity of their satisfaction, at this delightful arrangement. 'It is very kind of you to take us, Lady Elfintower.'

'Not at all—I shall be proud of such country bloom,' she said, smiling at the squire: 'you can trust them with me, I hope?' And the kindhearted woman knew that she had bestowed real pleasure, and went home happy in consequence. She possessed one of those benign and angel natures which the world cannot spoil; and it had indeed done its very best.

At half-past eleven the next day, the carriage called to take Fanny and Magdalene into those Belgravian regions, from which they had formerly been repulsed by the imposing flunkey, acting under the orders of his superfine mistress.

They were well and simply dressed, and looked freshly beautiful, their shy and diffident demeanour only distinguishing them from the beauties who had passed former seasons in town. They caused quite a sensation, under the distinguished chaperonage which they enjoyed, and were unconsciously sharing the admiration of the pedestrians with the graceful and beautiful Princess whom they came to see—so much so, that everybody was talking of the 'new girls with Lady Elfintower,' and the spark was kindled which so soon becomes a flame, when

lighted in certain quarters. The fine, listless, and exclusive guardsman actually forfeited his chair, and walked the whole length of the row, to meet the Elfintower party face to face—and the news of this feat on his part, spread like wildfire through the men in his set, so that the first thing which greeted the ears of Claire and Agatha Huntington—regular *habitués* of Rotten Row in the season—was, 'There are two such lovely girls with Lady Elfintower to-day, and no one can tell us who they are.'

'Perhaps they are Emmie and Georgie, the Hamilton twins,' said Claire, languidly. 'They are out this season, and they are both sweetly pretty.'

'Well, you'd better take a turn and look at them,' said Charley Longcheveux, puffing his cigar almost in the lady's face as he spoke; 'they are worth looking at, I can tell you.'

'Will you come, mother dear?' said Aggy; they were always remarkably affectionate in public. 'You won't be tired; and you can keep a chair for her, you know,' she added to the guardsman as she went off.

'Ta-ta!' was the reply of the delightful youth, whom the ladies spoilt to such an extent that his naturally manly nature had succumbed under the effects of it. 'Ta-ta! don't be too quick in coming back, or I shan't have finished my cigar.'

'What an impertinent creature it is!' said Mrs. Huntington, as though she were talking of the antics of a tame kitten. 'Perhaps, to punish you, we won't come back at all.'

'Oh, don't say that,' was the laughing reply; 'or I shall be obliged to come with you, and have another look at the pretty girls.'

Claire did not at all relish even this chaffing admiration of her unknown rivals, and this Charlie Longcheveux knew as well as she did: to tell the truth, his flirtation in that quarter was beginning to weary him, and he rather wished, as he told a brother officer who joined him, to get a rise out of 'little Clarry; as she was getting so

spoonery on him that it was rather a bore.

The despised heir of Sunnymead, who had worshipped Claire with true and manly, but *diffident* devotion, would have been inclined to resent this speech to the death, had he heard it; but as his cousin was unworthy of his love, and as he was beginning to find it out, it was as well for all parties that he did not.

As Mrs. Huntington and her fair daughters went on their unwelcome mission, they encountered their cousin Frank face to face. He had wished to meet them, to ascertain from his cousin her feelings with regard to himself. He was high-spirited and proud, and she had given him sufficient encouragement, in the winter, to make him feel that he had a right to ask.

Claire, as it happened, was in a bad temper, or she might have foreseen the expediency of playing off one handsome man against another; as it was, she only said, with a fine-lady air, extending a very languid hand in his direction, 'So you *have* turned up at last; I thought, at this time of year, you would all be making hay.'

'No,' was the reply, 'we only do that when the sun shines, and it appears to be cloudy to-day. Is that all you have to welcome me with, Claire?' he added, in a lower tone. 'I came here to meet you; but you hardly seem glad to see me.'

'I can't be gushing to-day,' she replied, 'it's too hot. Of course, it's the right thing to say to a first cousin, one's glad to see them. Did you see that article on cousins, in the "Saturday?" It was so clever.'

Frank was too much hurt to answer. Was this the same girl who had been so affectionate to them all at Sunnymead; who had challenged the admiration and attention of the cousin whom she now wished to treat *de haut en bas*; who had ridden his horses, worn his flowers, who had allowed him to press her hand, and to whisper in her ear the soft nothings which had been sacred in his eyes, because they were dictated by his own honest love? It was indeed the

same, only she had now revealed her true nature—before, it had worn a mask. The sudden conviction smote upon Frank that she was playing him false; and, unused to conceal his emotions, he raised his hat and left his cousin's side, and was soon one of the crowd, who were thronging to get a glimpse of the young Princess of Wales.

'I will go back into the country,' he thought, 'to-morrow, and make hay. I never could have dreamt of this.'

There was a Nemesis in store for Frank's wrongs, of which he knew nothing. As Claire and Aggy approached the Elfintower party, they raised their eyes to gaze upon the new girls, whose attractions had made such a sensation in the Park, and to their unmitigated amazement, they beheld, when they did so, their despised country cousins, *Fanny and Magdalene Woodbine*.

'Impossible!' was the word that rose to the surface of their staggered senses, and found utterance on their respective lips. 'Fanny and Magdalene! Impossible!' And responsive to their exclamation, the affectionate girls stepped forward, and warmly greeted Aunt Huntington and the two jealous and discomfited girls. The innocent intended victims of the fogie party, and the rejected tickets; the sisters of the man who had been so cruelly wounded but a moment ago by the fine-ladyism of a deceitful girl, put all their country warmth into their greeting of their now *mortified* cousins. But Lady Elfintower, to whom the appearance of any of that set acted as a refrigerator, at once cut short the meeting, with the refined tactics of an accomplished woman of the world. 'I like the Woodbines,' she said to her daughters, 'and will introduce them anywhere; but any attempt at acquaintance with *those* Huntingtons must be checked in the bud.'

'If you had but been decently civil to them, as I told you,' said Aggy, aggravatingly, to her mother and sister, 'we should have got asked to the Elfintower ball—but you would go your own way. You snubbed Frank, too, Clarry, and

he's not the sort of man who will take much of that.'

'We shan't ever be asked to Sunnymead again: you women must always meddle,' added the father of the family, with bitterness. 'You have managed to make a nice mess of it between you.'

'Who could possibly have foreseen that the Elfintowers would have taken them up so?' said Claire, snappishly; and to put the climax to that young lady's humiliation, Charlie Longcheveux looked in, to tempt the ladies to walk in the Park—the sting of the sentence lying in the motive which he assigned for asking them.

'I've bet Lady Gloriana ten pairs of gloves that I get an introduction to those pretty girls before night: they're cousins of yours, I think you told me; so come on, and we'll go shares. I shan't mind one of them being spooney on me, if they like; they are something quite out of the common—*de-li-cious*,' he added mischievously, for he saw the storm clouds gathering on Claire's brow; 'it's difficult to get near them, Lady Elfintower's a regular dragon of prudery placed within call. However, let's have a try.'

'How about the fogie party?' said Aggy. 'Do you know, Captain Longcheveux, Claire was so ashamed of her country cousins that she wished them to waste their sweetness on papa's Indian Nabob set; but I think they'll do for something better than that.'

'Hush, Aggy!' said Mrs. Huntington, sententiously; 'we would have done anything to bring the Woodbine girls into notice; but the Elfintowers being such intimate friends, it devolved upon them to introduce them.'

'I hope there is no brother or father to stand in the way of a needy adventurer of interesting appearance,' said the guardsman, laughing; and at this speech Claire, who had fancied herself in love with him, and who had thrown over Frank for his sake, could no longer conceal her humiliation, and hurried

from the room, to give a vent to her emotion, unseen and unpitied, in her own room. Frank Woodbine did not fulfil his intention of departing for the country the next day. Upon cool reflection, he discovered that it was not the real Claire that he had loved, but a creature of his own creation—a loving, truthful Claire, not the least like the would-be fine lady who had 'thought to win his country heart for pastime ere she went to town;' and he consoled himself with the idea that she was not a girl he would have liked to ask his mother to call daughter, and that it was fortunate for him that she herself had taken the initiative and thrown him over; for he was too manly and too honest to have played her false if she had not so coolly and designedly in the first place rejected him. Many such little comedies as the one described have been enacted in town during the last season: all of course have not ended in the discomfiture of artifice by simplicity, because in most instances artifice stands on its own ground and has the other more or less at its mercy. But it would perhaps be the cause of a family feud or a heart-burning the less, if country welcomes and country hospitalities found some little reflection in town during the season—for we can assure the readers of 'London Society' that Claire and Aggy, wearing out their faded silks, and restoring their faded complexions at a cheap watering-place, will look back with some bitterness to those happy hours spent at Sunnymead during the last autumn; and that Claire in particular, whose attentions the guardsman positively and absolutely declined, after the wished-for introduction to the 'apple-blossoms,' will shed many a tear in secret over the lost affection which now shines in comparison with such a pure and lambent light. There is not one of the party who does not bitterly regret the cool snub offered to those generous and simple-minded and hospitable *country cousins*.

THE BACHELOR'S THERMOMETER.

AT the age of twenty-five I found myself in possession of a tolerable exterior, some three hundred a year private property, a heavy stick, which ill-natured people called 'a ferocious bludgeon,' and a bull-dog, which they called 'a quarrelsome brute.' Yes! I am bound to admit that he was quarrelsome—to mankind very frequently, to dog-kind nearly always, but to me never. A faithful, attached, submissive animal, who seemed striving, by his zeal in my service, to make amends for those cynical propensities which he betrayed to the world in general—a creature gifted, it must be confessed, with a bad temper, yet with a substratum of latent worth, and a courage of that positive character which, in dark lanes and questionable neighbourhoods, rendered him a most efficient member of the Anti-garrotting Association.

Now pray remember, that a knowledge, on your part, of this portion of my property, gives you no right whatever to regard me as 'a dog-fancier.' On the contrary, I am singularly ignorant as to 'points' canine. To my own perception, this specimen was exceedingly ugly, notwithstanding the flattering dictum of stable-minded men, who looked on him with a serious air, as they reflectively sucked a straw, and shook their heads with an imposing gravity, intended to convey their high appreciation of his merits. It was, I suppose, a matter of taste, but I could not see his beauty. The space enclosed by his legs was to me a villainous compound of ellipse, rhomboid, and triangle, the apex of the latter geometrical demonstration being admirably represented by the sympathetic pedal convergence. And then he had that hypertrophied condition of head and neck, which, combined with massive jaws and a zenith-searching nose, go far, I believe, in the opinion of the knowing ones, to constitute evidences of good breeding. He was nearly all white, with a black patch over each eye, and a dirty-looking mark on one side of his mouth—characteristics by no

means contributing to amiability of expression; and, as a summing up of his peculiarities, it must be observed that he had a way of occasionally going on three legs—a tripod style of progression which is, I am told, a great thing in dogs of his nomenclature.

'What a vulgar beginning!' I hear some fair reader say. 'What do we want to know about the man and his dog? Doubtless the master went about in a rough coat with large buttons, and wore his hat on one side—the horrid stick in his hand, and the savage cur at his heels.' Ladies, to the latter clauses of your charge I bow assent, though venturing a protest against the justifiability of your adjectives. I always carried a stick, and my dog always followed me; but to your preliminary indictment I most positively demur. I dressed as a gentleman, and my conduct was, I trust and believe, in accordance.

Well then, how did I become possessed of this apparently objectionable property; and why did I so persistently flourish it in the eyes of the unappreciative world? In the first place, let me say that my three hundred a year was the bequest of a kind-hearted, eccentric old bachelor uncle, who left it in company with the appendages you object to. He said that he felt assured I should care for and respect the daily companions of his walks, when he was no longer on earth to protect them. They were, even beyond the comfortable little income, an evidence of his affectionate feelings towards me, and I did no injustice to the good old man's confidence. Thus it was that I became possessed of three hundred a year, a large, finely-polished, gnarled oak sapling, and a very far from polished specimen of the canine race. 'Still,' you will say, 'why so determined to carry them into society? Why court hostile criticism? Surely you were not, by the clauses of your uncle's will, bound to such a line of conduct?' Well, no; but it was my fancy to continue on the link of the old man's associa-

tions. To be ashamed of his specialities was in some measure to be ashamed of him; and, besides, I gauged my friends by their friendship for these my belongings. If they were cold to me in consequence—well, I didn't care—I rather liked it. To be sure, the dog was for ever getting me into scrapes. He seemed resolved to believe everybody and everything as set in antagonism to his interests, and the consequence was an amount of irascibility which involved me in many annoyances; but I bore it all, and stuck to the creature with a dogged resolution, which did considerable justice to my steadfastness of temperament.

Now, don't make another mistake, and regard me as contented with a single life. On the contrary, I pined for domestic peace. It was the one sweet dream of my early days; but somehow my dog gave me a bad character. I was not looked upon as a marrying man; and, being the victim of a sensitive disposition, I rather withdrew myself from the chances of that consummation which I had mused on even in the time of boyhood.

My occupations were, for the most part, of a literary character, and I frequently indulged in my favourite pastime of fishing. It was while prosecuting a ramble of this kind in North Wales that I received the following letter from my good mother, who had been left a widow in my childhood. In truth I was so young, that I could scarcely recollect my father; but the tenderness and respect with which my only parent hung upon the memories of her married life were among the most beautiful traits of her gentle, loving nature, and proved how happy she must have been, and how happy she had made the path of her best and dearest friend.

Now for my mother's letter.

‘Oxford Square.

‘MY DEAREST CHARLES,

‘How often have I heard you say, that you sigh for domestic peace; and I am sure you know how to attain it. There is no fonder wish of my heart, than to see you fulfilling the duties of home. Well, I have lately made the acquaintance of an old friend of your noble father's. He has lately

come to reside in our neighbourhood, and you will be prepared to hear that he has a daughter. She is certainly handsome and accomplished, and, I think, amiable, but you must form your own conclusions. Come to town and introduce yourself; you will have a cordial greeting. The rest is in the future.

‘One word, my dear boy: don't appear with that stick and dog, which I must say I am very much opposed to as your daily companions. I have great veneration for your good uncle's wishes—still, I think you carry them out to a length not called for. But I won't worry you on this subject, for I know it to be a tender point; only you must remember that your appendages are not quite satisfactory credentials wherewith to gain the favour of a fair lady.

‘The name is Major-General Carston; the address—Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park. I am going to Richmond to-morrow for a few days, but I shall return by the end of the week.

‘Believe me,

‘With much love,

‘Ever your affectionate Mother,
‘HENRIETTA DALTON.’

To which I replied immediately:—

‘MY VERY DEAR MOTHER,

‘Your wish shall be at once respected. I will come and I will call at the general's, heartily trusting that your kind thoughts for my happy future may have a pleasing solution in the result of that acquaintance you desire me to make. Yet, I must say, as a rule I am rather doubtful of an arranged affair of this kind. I should like some accident to be the incentive; yet I promise you I will not harden my heart. But, mother dear, I am obdurate touching the household gods of my bachelorhood; I keep them and show them as thermometers, whereby I test the sincerity of my fellow-men. I won't take them up into the general's drawing room; but I really must take them to his house. So, for having a will of his own on this subject, you must forgive your undutiful, but very affectionate son,

‘CHARLES DALTON.’

Two days after the despatch of this letter I rang the bell of No. —, Gloucester Terrace—my summons bringing into view a fine specimen of the flunkey tribe. To my inquiry whether the general was at home he replied in the affirmative, and certainly in a respectful manner; but it was evident that those nervous susceptibilities, so especially the attribute of his race, were painfully excited by the observation of my

oak sapling. There was a melancholy expostulative look about the creature which was quite touching. He was, however, only at the commencement of his trials: the mental equilibrium was to receive a still more painful shock. While ushering me into the hall, he suddenly called out, with a voice of lamentation and cruelly wounded feeling, to a boy in buttons—

‘Jawn, ’ow did that ’orrid hanimal get in ’ere? Drive ’im out himmedately!’

I regarded the aggrieved Jeames with a stern air, and informed him that the dog was mine.

Jeames was frightfully taken aback—his very hair seemed to go out of curl, and the powder to fly off, while a perceptible shiver ran through his admirable calves. He was quite upset—what with confusion at his unfortunate mistake, and horror at the impropriety of such an appearance as a bull-dog in the classic domain of flunkeydom.

Begging pardon in a hurried tone, he desired me to ascend the stairs; but I could see that his delicate sensitiveness had been rudely trampled on. He was suffering—I heard him sigh. Really I pitied Jeames!

From the old general I received a very cordial greeting. I liked his heartiness of manner, albeit somewhat tinged with that pomposity which might fairly be ascribed to the habit of command and Indian experience. Miss Carston was a handsome, showy girl, with dark hair and fine eyes; but there was too much self-possession. I read her quickly: a woman decidedly clever, and withal imperious; fond of admiration, and exacting it as her due; with sufficient knowledge of the world to render her perfectly at ease in the presence of a stranger. The eyes shone with a brilliant gleam; they looked straightly into your face; there was no tender, soul-subduing light; and I do not think I was mistaken in regarding her as fully gifted with the powers of sarcasm—at all times a most objectionable weapon in the hands of those who should seek to conquer only by the force of affectionate earnestness. You will at once perceive

that I was not favourably impressed with the lady recommended by my good mother. I had promised her that I would not go prepared to resist the influence of Miss Carston’s charms; but there was an uncontrollable conviction within me as to the insufficiency of their power to subdue.

I will not afflict my readers with the details of a morning call; they can easily fill up the conversation from their own experiences of such necessary sacrifices on the altar of custom. This present oblation was not, however, I am bound to say, so dreary as the majority of such offerings; for Miss Carston was certainly an intelligent and accomplished girl.

Several times during my stay with the general and his daughter, I fancied I heard something between a smothered growl, a whine, and a bark, which I strongly suspected were indications of approaching eccentricity on the part of my dog Mommy. The sounds seemed nearer than I could have desired. I judged that the animal had surreptitiously found his way up stairs, and I was not deceived; for, on taking my leave, and the door being opened, in rushed my disreputable associate.

‘Oh! mercy on us, where did that hideous creature come from?’ said, or rather screamed, Miss Carston. ‘I observed a ruffianly-looking man with a sack over his shoulder in the street—the wretch is probably his.’ And she rang the bell violently.

Not, of course, with the indignant look which I had directed at the sensitive Jeames, but still with some coldness of manner, I stated the fact of my ownership, at the same time apologizing most freely for the unwarrantable invasion of her drawing-room.

Her acceptance of my explanation was not exactly ungracious, but there was most assuredly no warmth of response. The satire, too, must come—I could see it playing about the corners of her mouth, and presently she said—

‘Excuse my asking, Mr. Dalton, why—’

‘Why I am seen in company with such an appendage as this, I presume you mean, Miss Carston?’

'I confess that to be what I was about to convey.'

'Well, Miss Carston, my dog is called Mommy—it is an abbreviation of thermometer. I regard him in this light: I keep him as a test of temperature on the part of my friends.'

'I see. Of course I could not be supposed to know that you had any interest in this very peculiar dog; so that must be my excuse for surprise at his sudden appearance.'

'On the part of Mommy, I humbly beg pardon. It certainly was a most improper proceeding.'

'Oh,' replied the lady, 'say nothing more about it. But may I inquire if your regarding this pet of yours as a thermometer does not give evidence of the freezing point being attainable in consequence?'

'Whenever I find such to be the case, I know how to meet it.'

There was a little more bantering of this kind, in which I am bound to admit that Miss Carston shone to advantage; but here again her powers of sarcasm were an effectual bar to those tender feelings which my mother had visioned for me.

In all this little warfare of words I have said nothing with regard to the share of the old general. He appeared vastly amused, and expressed his opinion that the dog was a fine specimen of his class.

So Mommy and I descended to the region of the painfully sensitive Jeames, who seemed to shrink back in apprehension from the very carnivorous look which Mommy directed to the immaculate stockings. The dog was, I am sure, aware that he had been made the subject of conversation far from complimentary, and was quite prepared to resent it. He certainly growled in an ominous way, and I was glad enough to quit the house without a more positive outbreak. I am sure I heard smothered laughter when the door was closed, and I felt convinced that the cruelly-wronged Jeames had been quite aware of Mommy's ascent to the drawing-room, and did not choose to disturb the wishes of the animal. Jeames had been shamefully injured in the finest emotions of his flunkey breast, and he had his revenge in

exposing the author to the criticisms of the higher powers.

On the Friday following my mother returned from Richmond, and, though I could see she was much diverted at this fresh recital of Mommy's eccentricities, she shook her head in a mild, deprecating way.

'Ah, Charles, Charles! there it is again. Why, that unhappy dog is your rock ahead. What infatuation! I wonder you are not tired of the annoyances you receive at his hands.'

'But, my dear mother,' said I, 'I really don't know that they are annoyances. You are acquainted with my theories on the subject.'

'Oh yes, obstinate son of mine, I think I am pretty well conversant with them. But now, seriously, do you really mean to say that you were right in bringing your dog into a sphere where you might be almost sure that he would do you little credit?'

'Well, dear mother, as a question of conventionalities—no; but, taken as a part of my moral position—yes.'

'Ah! your old sophistry! Well, I suppose I must forgive you, on consideration of quick attention to my desire.'

'I fear I'm a very bad boy, and it is true that I have much to put up with from Mommy; but let us hope that he will do something grand by-and-by, to make amends.'

'I hope so too, but confess to be very doubtful. I think you are more likely to get fined, through some outrageous conduct of his.'

'Well, it must be admitted, my precious mother, that I have had to compound more than once for sundry delicate attentions of his to the legs of mankind.'

'I can easily believe that. Oh, you queer boy!'

'Still, I am resolved to be his friend. I say, mother dear, your kind scheming for my matrimonial prospects will not in this case be successful. Miss Carston is not to my taste, without any reference to my vulgar associate.'

'Well, be it as you will; I only wish to see you happy,' said my kind

parent, smiling in her own affectionate way, as I reverentially kissed her fine open forehead.

'Oh, it will come all right some day, dear mother. I see I must go back to Wales and have a little more fishing; so on Monday morning I return: and you must, when you next see the Carstons, make the best excuse you can for your hopeful.'

My journeys by rail were not at all without their excitement. I travelled about a good deal, and I am sure that Mommy was well known at sundry stations. He had the strongest objection to dog-boxes, and his antagonism to railway porters was a peculiar feature in his character. I always felt that I was in some measure bound to 'tip' these unfortunate officials; for unfortunate they certainly were when it became their duty to provide travelling accommodation for my irascible quadruped. When stowed away, his dismal howling was anything but pleasing to a musical ear. I rather fancy he kept it up all through the journey; for whenever the train stopped I heard his vociferations, and the inference I drew was, I think you will say, more than probable.

I was soon engaged in following the course of a beautiful Welsh mountain stream; and one afternoon, after a long and pretty successful spell, I had thrown myself on the grass to enjoy the luxury of rest—Mommy, too, taking a siesta on the edge of the river path. While gazing, now down upon the merry leaping waters, now up to the lofty hill range, behind which the sun was sinking through the blue haze of an evening in May—my chain of many fancies was in a moment interrupted, to make room for a fairer vision. A young lady, book in hand, her attention evidently fully engrossed, came slowly on by the meadow path. Before the distance had been sufficiently abridged to allow a glance at her features, I was struck by the easy, graceful, though stately tread. She was tall, of slight, elegant figure; and, as she came nearer, I was able to recognize a beautiful classic outline, with brown hair, of that enchanting shade which

catches the gleam of the sunlight. But the eyes had the chiefest charm—dark, yet soft and reflective—tender, loving eyes. I could not help watching her, though careful to avoid the slightest evidence of an obtrusive stare. It was clear enough that she did not observe me, and soon I had a more positive confirmation of this; for, unmindful of Mommy's presence in the course she was treading, she came down, much to his astonishment and indignation, upon that worthy's tail. I had no time to prevent it—my attention had been so thoroughly centred upon the fair unknown, that I had no room for other thoughts. But I was up in a moment—and not too quickly; for the anger of Mommy was such, that he at once growled furiously, and sprang upon the lady, catching hold of her dress in his teeth. I could see she was much alarmed, but she forbore any exhibition of screaming. Mommy came in for a kick which sent him flying; and I hastily expressed great concern at the fright she had undergone.

'Oh,' said she, in the sweetest of voices, 'thank you very much! But pray, don't hurt the dog: it was all my fault. Poor thing! I am sure I must have hurt him.'

Dear girl! All the noble nature shining out in this kind speech—my heart was strangely stirred within me. She was somewhat pale from the fright; and, scarcely knowing what I was doing, and every now and then stammering like a boy of eighteen, I walked by her side. It was not long before we reached her mother's pretty cottage. As I lingered unconsciously, she stooped down, and softly, though it seemed rather timidly, patted the ugly head of my generally-shunned animal, saying, 'I hope you'll forgive me.' Bless you, he understood it at once—I never saw him look so amiable. At last I left her, and went home with a tumult of thought that had never before moved the depths of my spirit.

In the morning I called on Mrs. Foster, a nice, kind old lady, who reminded me of my own good mother. Gertrude was an only child. But why need I give a narrative of that which you know must come?

We loved each other—and now Gertrude is my own precious wife.

It is eight years ago since our first meeting. The time is evening. You shall see our 'home circle.' My wife is engaged on some abstruse geometrical divisions, familiarly known by the title of 'cutting out;' my mother, who is on a visit with us, is knitting; and I am writing. On a low stool at the feet of mamma are seated a brother and sister, looking over a book of pictures; while our youngest sprawls on the hearthrug by the side of Mommy—now old and lazy, and upon this occasion enjoying one of his privilege nights. Dalton, junior, is busily employed in the exhilarating amusement of boring his dimpled fist into Mommy's eye; but there is no sign of displeasure—only a slight deprecating movement when the operation becomes a little more energetic than is consistent with the

principles of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Presently I look up from my occupation, and my heart is full of a calm, soul-satisfying, grateful joy. My mother observes my peaceful, reflective look—I know she can read my thoughts—and then I say—

'Mother dear, was Mommy such a very bad dog, after all?'

'Charles, my son,' she replies, smiling in the face of my wife, whom she dearly loves, 'that dog was one of your best friends.'

Then my wife moves to my mother's side, and, as she steals her hand to meet the pressure of a fond husband's clasp, affectionately kisses the kind old lady.

And our two eldest children look up in wonder, for none of us speak; and mamma's beautiful eyes are full of tears.

And we are very, very happy.

OXFORD DOINGS.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'LONDON SOCIETY.'

DEAR SIR,
 To-day I feel rather blue,
Ennuyé in fact, and so in lieu
 Of something better just now to do,
 I've made up my mind to write to you;
 And briefly let your readers know
 What fell within my observation,
 Some six or seven weeks ago,
 At Oxford's great commemoration.

On the thirteenth of June ('twas a Saturday),
 From New Court, Middle Temple, I got away;
 Went out in the midst of a shower of rain,
 Hailed a cab at the corner of Chancery Lane,
 And the Paddington Station was able to gain
 Just in time to catch the 6·30 train.

'The resonant steam eagle'
 Onwards, westward, flew,
 Stopped at Didcot Junction
 To take in one or two;
 And soon the spires of Oxford
 Flashed suddenly in view.

No sooner had each on the platform got out
 Than a Babel of voices was heard all about.
 'That hat-box is mine,' cries a voice dictatorial;
 'My cousin, Miss Jones, Mr. Johnson of Oriel.'
 'How are you, mamma? I've a ticket for Fanny,
 For the Brazenose performance, 'twas hard to get any;
 But Smith of St. John's had got a good many,
 And perhaps I'll be able to smuggle in Annie.'

The 'Brazenose theatricals' that night were to be,
 But the Brazenose theatricals / didn't see,
 For nobody there had a ticket for *me*;
 And though at the time I did not much care,
 I'm now rather sorry I missed them, I swear;
 For since then I heard a friend who was there
 (Not herself a bad judge of the drama), declare,
 That the acting of all was uncommonly fair,
 And that one or two might not have blushed to compare
 With that wonderful captain, I mean Legardièrè,
 Who first drives '*the vœlets*' all into despair;
 Runs his sword through '*the master*,' or rather '*Mastère*,'
 And winds up by marrying Bla-aunch De Nevers!

On *Sunday* there was nothing occurred to amuse ye,
 But all went to church, as of course appeared right;
 And the Bishop of Oxford, and Doctor Pusey,
 Preached, one in the morning, the other at night.

But in the evening after tea,
 All blooming as the red rose—
 Behold each fair ladyè
 By college cousin led, goes
 The promenade to see,
 Within the Christ Church meadows.

It seemed to me as though one of the scenes
 In 'Ida's' College Life were acted there,
 'With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
 And sweet girl-graduates in golden hair!'

Doctors of Law, and of Divinity,
 Learned Professors, swells in Latinity,
 Men from Christ Church, and Oriel, and Baliol, and Trinity,
 Backwards and forwards by hundreds were walking,
 And each to some sweet girl appeared to be talking.

Girls of all sorts were there that night,
 Girls in blue and girls in white,
 Girls with dark hair and girls with light,
 Tall and short, and of middle height,
 Bewitching us all with their eyes so bright;
 On my word, my dear sir, 'twas a very fine sight!

So much for Sunday—

And on the Monday,

Visitors, residents, freshmen, and dons,
 Who could get tickets went to a concert at John's,
 The only thing worth seeing that day,
 And I can take on myself to say,
 That the singing was uncommonly good in its way,
 And the audience all went delighted away.

Next morning the joy-bells were merrily rung,
 And hundreds of flags in the windows hung,
 Their silken folds to the breezes flung!
 And roses and lilies in garlands strung
 To the houses, as if they grew there, clung.
 And town and gown, and gown and town,
 Shout as if they would pull the old colleges down,
 And, united *for once*, in loyalty vie,
 As the Prince and the Princess drive down '*the High*!'
 To the carriage the people all rush to get nigh;
 And the Volunteers can't keep them back though they try.

* '*The High*'—the name given by Oxford men to High Street.

But the royal procession's no sooner pass'd by,
Than to Christ Church quadrangle all instantly fly,
To see each Volunteer, who had hit the bull's eye,
Get a prize from our lovely Princess by-and-by!

This over, we hurry, as fast as may be,
To the theatre called 'The Sheldonian' to see
His Royal Highness receive his Doctor's degree.
The moment I entered there were shouts of 'Who's that?'
From the men who aloft in the gallery sat,
'Take off your hat, sir! off with your HAT!'
My 'tile' I removed at the horrible sound,
Pushed as far as I could in, and then gazed all around.

A thousand Freshmen there
In the upper gallery yelled;
A thousand ladies fair
The lower circle held;
A thousand men below,
Spite of bobbies and of proctors,
Swayed all madly to and fro—
Graduates, masters, doctors!
Two hours we wait for the fun to begin,
'Mid shoving and pushing and clamour and din.

At length the door swings open wide—
Way for our Prince's lovely bride!
But when within the entrance
We saw her face appear,
We gave her one long rapturous cry,
And even the ladies' gallery
Could scarce forbear to cheer!
Immediately after, her husband was seen,
And all of us loudly sang 'God save the Queen!'
Then happened more things than I can tell.
As soon as Lord Derby the riot could quell,
He conferred on the Prince his D. C. L.,
In a neat Latin speech, which he gave very well.
Then followed two odes on *which I'll not dwell*,
And we got out at four by the Christ Church bell.

To St. John's we went next, to see a bazaar,
It was crowded, as such places usually are;
By the angels who held stalls we were cheerfully robbed,
And the Prince and Princess were woefully mobbed.

In the Corn Exchange Hall
That night the Freemasons gave a ball.
From all I can guess
It was a success;
But whether the number was large or was small
I can't say, for *I* didn't go there at all!

Next day 'what time the amber morn' (a phrase that's Tennysonian)
Was stealing on towards nine o'clock, I went to 'The Sheldonian.'
Amid the graduates I sat, for hours 'mid noise and clatter,
And shouts of 'Cheers for Jowett,' 'Where is Kingsley?' 'Who's
your hatter?'
At length as on the day before
The noise was hushed, and through the door
The royal couple came once more.

Again 'God save the Queen' was sung,
 And again our cheers through the old walls rung.
 They cheered for Derby and they groaned for Pam,
 And then 'the tumult dwindled to a calm!'
 Cairns, Cardwell, Whiteside, and some other swells,
 Came forward and received their D. C. L.'s.
 Some Don gives of each a long-winded history,
 While the greater part cheer, and some few a hiss try,
 And Lord Derby asks, 'Placet ne vobis Magistri?'
 'Admitto te
 Ad gradum Doctoris,
 In jure Civili,
 Causâ honoris.'

Which, as some of your readers may not of late
 Have brushed up their classics, I'll try and translate.
 'Thee I admit of Civil Laws, a
 Doctor,' (this is what he meant);
 'And you get the degree, honoris causâ,'
 That is, by way of a compliment.
 Then essay and speech and recitation
 Followed each other in rapid rotation;
 And *somebody* gave us a Latin oration,
 From which *nobody* got much information!
 Till at length 'mid 'Three cheers for the Long Vacation,'
 Lord Derby dismissed the Convocation.

I haven't now time, or might tell of the fête
 In the Worcester Gardens kept up till late,
 And the boats' procession not over till eight,
 Where the Prince and the Princess again we met,
 And the Balliol crew all got an upset,
 But escaped by only being thoroughly wet.

To sum up the whole, the close of all,
 We finished the night with the Christ Church ball.
 By those I ween who saw the scene
 'Twill be forgotten never;
 And *some* who were there, I've heard declare,
 'Twill *colour* their *lives* for ever!
 Whether this be true, I cannot say,
 Not knowing; however, be *that* as it may,
 All night the dancers danced away,
 Till the darkness slowly gave place to day,
 And the lights died out in the morning gray.
 One more dance and only one,
 In a long last galop round we spun;
 And the curtain fell on the Oxford fun!

H. M.



THE ENGLISH IN FRANCE.

AT half-past three, or thereabouts, in the afternoon of the twenty-first of June, in a certain modern year of grace, an important and remarkable event happened in the biography of William Elyot, M.A., late of St. Bobas' College, and now professor at a northern university. At that precise date Mr. Elyot fell in love. The day is to be remembered, inasmuch as it was the longest day of the year. The hour is to be known very approximately, for at this very instant he was engaged in looking at his watch. Only approximately, for he had not altered his watch since he had been in Edinburgh—three days ago, and at the moment above mentioned, the bounding steamboat was carrying him along to the coasts of fair France. Latitude and longitude, we know, create their variations in charts and watches. At such a time then did Mr. Elyot fall in love with Alice Darlingford. At such a time his eyes fell on that perfect face, and the destiny of that very impulsive man was sealed. Why has it not come to pass earlier than now, when the vessel is sighting the cliffs of Boulogne? Mr. Elyot, being a learned professor, may have been wrapt in abstruse contemplations respecting Jupiter's satellites. Being also of mortal clay, he may have been consuming chops and sherry in the cabin. I do not pretend to explain the details of this phenomenal occurrence. As a plain man I simply narrate plain facts.

Let there be no mystification. I am not going to write a love story: such would be no business of mine. I am going to write a paper, more or less dry, accurate, and careful, concerning the *English in France*. I shall also use a few facts, not of an unromantic kind, which have come to my knowledge, and I shall permit myself any amount of liberty in respect to *these*. I have at once given my readers the clear facts respecting Mr. Elyot. He was a great scholar who had done great things at the University. He had

lately been promoted to the chair of Moral Philosophy in a northern university. He was perhaps less noted for his acquired learning than for his own rare and original thoughts. His chair was worth six or seven hundred a year, and his own private income was as much. He had lately published a remarkable volume of poems which were exciting a good deal of attention.

We have therefore a good deal, and much to his credit, respecting Mr. Elyot. Colonel Darlingford, however, knew nothing. He answered in rather curt, military phrase, a remark which was promptly addressed by Mr. Elyot to the owner of the young lady with the eyes. Let it not be supposed that this gentleman at all answered the traditional idea of a Professor. He wore no spectacles, and carried no umbrella. His figure showed no traces either of ink or snuff. He was destitute of books and paper. In age he was hardly more than twenty-eight or twenty-nine. In figure he was almost the model of a Hercules. Yet the Colonel put him down at once as a rambling actor, artist, or author. In look, Mr. Elyot was all three; had always associated with such, and could claim either character. He wore a bad hat. He could indeed proudly reflect that he was one of the few men who could afford to wear a bad hat. The bad hat was pertinaciously brushed the wrong way. The shirt-front was partially open to the sea-breeze. His beard and moustache presented the unfavourable aspect of the 'growing' process. In fact, Professor Elyot was in one of what he called his 'transitional' states. That state was a perfect horror of conventionality, and a considerable contempt for civilization. He was very careless in his double right as a man of genius and a man of fortune. It was now that long six months' vacation which Scottish professors have the advantage of enjoying. This being the case, and as he was bending his way to a

foreign part, he appropriately assumed a lawless and vagabond demeanour. This much may account for his unprepossessing exterior, and a certain amount of suspicion and dislike which the stiff Colonel instinctively felt towards him. He had always been an eccentric, a romantic, an imaginative man. This much may account for his falling in love with Alice Darlingford.

The remark which he addressed to the Colonel admitted either of the categorical, or the explanatory answer. The Colonel gave a categorical negative, and moved away to get his traps together. The young lady, in sweet accent and phrase, supplemented the incomplete reply. The charm of a pretty face is frequently spoilt by the voice. The charm of this pretty face was considerably heightened thereby. It was the melodious voice of a thoroughbred, intelligent, kindhearted lady. The Moral Philosopher moralized and philosophized, how he should improve this acquaintance. The Colonel returning, found Mr. Elyot engaged in framing a sententious remark which smacked of Murray: 'The army at Boulogne, under Napoleon, had intended to invade England, but the English had invaded and taken Boulogne.' Their common destination did not materially raise his fellow-traveller in the Colonel's estimation. Friends of mine, in an enviable, solvent condition, have resided at Boulogne; but this is hardly the common rule.

'True patriots we, for be it understood,
We left our country for our country's good,'

are lines not without some appropriateness for a considerable proportion of that two-thirds of the inhabitants of Boulogne who are made up of English people. The Colonel looked upon the stranger with that suspicion which the inhabitants of Boulogne very generally entertain towards each other. This was very unjust, as the shortness of the sea-passage might equally and adequately explain both their routes. I am told that Boulogne is a great place for scandal and suspicion, and here the *genius*

loci was already active. It is an immense place for gossip, and gossip, as a rule, is not productive of charitable feeling. Neither do the English appear to fraternize very much, or to enjoy much agreeable, general society among themselves. The *odium theologicum* has also been busy of late. A clergyman employed by a religious society has assumed the title of chaplain to the place, which would perhaps more rightly belong to the senior resident clergyman: hence a considerable amount of ill-feeling. I am aware that in all these hasty generalizations about a place some amount of injustice is involved, which, I trust, the well-informed reader will correct for himself. They met repeatedly next day both in the 'high' and the 'low town'—on the jetty, in the fish-market, in the museum, in the cathedral, in front of the monument. Evidently none of these three was to be a permanent denizen of the place. It is the rapid tourist who works industriously through a town, not the inhabitant. The Professor felt it quite in order to address a few remarks to his late fellow-travellers, which were politely enough received. It did not require very much address on his part to ascertain the hotel where they were staying, their names, or the time of their departure for Paris. He discovered that, by a singular coincidence, that was also his own time of departure. He provided himself with a first-class ticket in order to be prepared for all contingencies. Like sensible people, the Colonel and his daughter were travelling in the cool, comfortable, cushioned second class. It was the adroit scheme of Mr. Elyot to take his seat in the same carriage. Now had such a trifling event been a matter of the purest indifference to him; had he been an easy, well-bred, self-occupied stranger, nothing would have been more simple or more natural; but being a nervous man, having romantically chosen to fall in love, being morbidly apprehensive that he was concentrating upon himself a vast deal of attention, which was of course quite

imaginary, he felt conscious, hesitating, and uneasy. A railway station is no place for hesitation. When he had summoned up resolution to walk to their carriage-door, and to say, with an assumption of ease that betrayed his embarrassment, 'I will give myself the pleasure of taking a seat in your carriage,' he encountered a gesture of dissent from the old gentleman, who intimated that all the places were taken.

Unhappily, Elyot's features had no impossibility: they were eloquent in expression, and that expression was dismay. A German gentleman, either because he thought that a party was being separated, or because he was touched by the pathos of the look, or because he divined the state of affairs, or because he preferred a smoke, arose and offered to yield his place to our traveller. He protested against this, but was heartily pleased when he saw the German enter the smoking-saloon, where he vehemently smoked for a hundred miles. The vacant seat was now taken. It did not appear, however, that he was likely to be much of a gainer. The Colonel was soon wrapped in British imperturbability. The young lady read some Tauchnitz edition quietly, or looked out of the window at the scenery. It is impossible, however, for a young lady to be studious, or meditative, or silent for a journey of a hundred and thirty miles. Once or twice some conversation took place which even became animated and prolonged. The Professor was familiar with the ground, and his knowledge of the localities through which they passed made him an interesting and amusing companion.

'You have never been in France before, then?' asked Elyot.

'Only when I was a child,' replied Miss Darlingford. 'My remembrances are very shadowy. I was at school at Tours. I had an aunt living there. Papa was then in India.'

'Tours was quite an English colony then, I suppose?' was the response. 'Indeed it is so still; but not so much as it used to be. People shift their residences much

oftener now travelling is so cheap. But tell me, did you like Tours?'

'As a child I liked it very well. I liked the Loire. I liked to think of poor Goldsmith making the villagers dance to his music as he wandered along its banks. And then the cathedral, and its noble music! The cathedral music which I heard when I was a child seems grander than what I hear now.'

The answer pleased the Professor. He was a man who often amused himself with the analysis of the sentences of a conversation. Of course the remark about the music is simply a common illusion; still the sentence showed a power of vivid recollection, and contained a literary allusion. Its best effect was, however, undoubtedly bestowed on the sweet voice and the sweet eyes.

'Perhaps I should not like Tours so well now: we have no friends left there at present.'

'The society that pleased the little girl,' returned Elyot, 'would scarcely please the young lady: it is of a limited and imperfect kind. Young ladies prefer those capitals from which the denizens of a place like Tours have exiled themselves. English people go to Tours, or Calais, or Rouen, or Boulogne, because provisions are cheap, because education is cheap, because amusements are cheap. Sometimes there are painful reasons why they should not reside at home: sometimes they intend to stay only a short time, and yet stay to spend languid years. Of course I am speaking of those who permanently settle down, not of those who are staying for only a few days, weeks, or months.'

'Do they like their French residences better than old England?'

'For a time they do; but then *nostalgia* comes. Do you know what I mean by *nostalgia*?'

'Perfectly: you mean that desire for home which becomes a positive pain. I understand it, and I have felt it too.'

'I am sorry you should have felt anything painful. For my own part, England is a country which I am always glad to leave, and to which I am always glad to return;

but many of these absentees often feel the keen unhappiness of exile.'

'But they are not exiles, sir: they often like their chains, and prefer the country of their adoption to that of their birth. They have many comforts. They have the services of their own church.'

'It is very true: English chaplains are settled all over the Continent; but none of them have that grey antiquity, that immemorial chasm that belongs to the English Church in city or village.'

'Tours was very well off,' was the reply, 'and various other places are better off than Tours. Some continental places have their most striking associations for us—Lisbon, Rome, Geneva.'

'The service is held in all kinds of places: at Venice, in a decayed palace; at Aix, in a Lutheran church. Sometimes it is conducted in a fortress; sometimes in an hotel; sometimes in a hired room. In France, where there must be some fifty resident English clergy, we are worse off than in any other country.'

'How is that?'

'Look at Paris: the Wesleyans have a very handsome church. The Russian church is a magnificent ornament to the city. The Americans are going to build a new church. Paris, with quantities of English people——'

'How many English do you suppose there are in Paris?' suddenly asked the Colonel, whose imperturbability had subsided into a prolonged nap.

'I believe about twelve thousand,' replied the Professor. 'Among these there must be always a fluctuating population of several thousands.'

'But these are surely not all grand people?'

'No, mademoiselle, nor even middling people. There are many persons engaged in business of very different grades. Then, again, the French are very fond of having the English in their stables, believing them the best people for horses. There are, therefore, a great number of English coachmen, grooms, and cabmen. Again, there are a num-

ber of English employed in the iron-works and gas-works. The Scotch gardener, too, is frequently employed.'

'I am glad that the English are so well appreciated.'

'They are appreciated better than they are liked. Their best writers praise our institutions, and the very *gamins* prefer our fruits. You will soon understand the Anglomania. I do not think the poorer French classes have a very friendly feeling towards us, and are certainly ready enough to cheat. That fine day we had three days ago, the 18th, revives unpleasant memories.'

A pause.

'Do you know Rouen?'

'Scarcely, sir. We passed through once, and stayed at Smith's "Albion Hotel," where I remember we were very unfairly treated. I had only time in the morning, before the train started, to run and see St. Ouen. What a beautiful church it is!'

'In reality one of the finest cathedrals in the world. Its fame would be spread throughout the world if it were only in Paris: that is very deficient in ecclesiastical architecture. There is a large colony of poor English at Rouen, and a few of a wealthier class. The railroad was entirely made by English labourers. The poor fellows have a brewery to brew their own beer. This is their way of keeping true to distant England. The English chaplain officiates both in Rouen and a little way out of it. What a venerable city is Rouen, and, at the same time, so stirring with young and brilliant life!'

'Do you know Normandy well? the watering-places there?'

'Yes: there are several of them along the coast. They are tolerably quiet, such as Fecamp, differing from the fashionable places. Here, when you are tired of cities, you may go down to the quiet coast, introduce yourself to yourself, and cultivate your own better acquaintance.'

Some fitful conversation followed on the subject of French literature. Frequently enough the young lady who chatters French fluently has a

very imperfect acquaintance with French history and literature, and the Englishman who is well posted up in these is a very poor conversationalist. Miss Darlingford spoke the language with great purity, and appeared to be unusually well read, better than most Paris ladies, who seem to think that the age of the classics is gone by, and find even Guizot too dry for them. I do not enter further into this conversation, which was at times conducted with great tact and spirit—one of those rare conversations in which each person is honestly desirous of learning something. It was the old story, 'the way of a man with a maid,' which taxed the wisdom of Solomon in vain to understand.

It was now dark, momentarily growing darker. The gallant Colonel had again sunk into healthful repose.

'Why are you coming to France, Monsieur?' she asked.

'Why are you, Miss Darlingford?'

'Oh! I see you know my name.'

'I know it by heart,' was the response.

A slight laugh. If Mr. Elyot had answered the question accurately, he would have said that, properly speaking, he did not come under the description of the 'English in France:' he was only rapidly passing through. To-night he would be at Paris; the night after at Marseilles; the night after on the Mediterranean. But he thought he would have his own question answered first.

'We travel partly for health and partly for amusement. Papa thinks we had better know one country pretty well before we proceed to another. We shall spend some time in France, and shall travel about a great deal.'

'That is exactly my own plan,' was the rejoinder. 'I mean to give myself three months to perfect myself in the language, and see the principal places.'

'Really that will be very nice. We shall probably meet again.'

'What is your line of travel?'

'Oh, just commonplace. We shall go where the English go. If papa were alone, he would take

some pedestrian exercise, or climb the Alps or Pyrenees. I dare say that will be the case with you.'

At this moment the Colonel awoke. Elyot said something to the effect that it might be the pleasantest place, but perhaps not the best for learning the language. Then the conversation flagged. The Colonel showed signs of being both cross and tired. It ought to be observed that there was not a vestige of *coquetterie* about the young lady, but she was, perhaps, a shade more conversational during the slumbers of her commander-in-chief.

They arrived at the station—all bustle, lights, confusion. He proffered his services but they were not required. The young lady made a graceful bow. Her father, in a gruff, business-like tone, sharply wished him good night. He watched them into a *voiture de remise*. It was his intention to take another, and follow them. Another carriage was not to be had. He would walk briskly and keep them in view. He got as far as the Place Vendôme, where there was a multiplicity of carriages in swift motion, and he lost sight of them.

Where had they gone? Most likely to an hotel: if he knew which he would go there also. At the top of the Rue de la Paix he was nearly opposite the Grand Hôtel. He would inquire there if any party answered the description. As it was the biggest hotel, there would be the biggest chance. They were certainly going in that direction. Perhaps they might have turned sharp round and gone to the Hôtel Bristol. No, the Hôtel Bristol was hardly likely. An ambassador or an earl might go there, but hardly an Indian colonel. At the Grand Hôtel he heard that a gentleman, accompanied with a lady who seemed his daughter, had arrived. It seemed a forlorn speculation, but he adopted it in default of a better.

They had left Boulogne by the 5.30 train, which of course arrives in Paris at eleven o'clock. The Boulevards were still gay, the green of the trees contrasting with the lights and the colours of the shops. Merry groups of passers-by, quiet

groups sitting in front of the cafés; in fact, the glorious drawing-room which Paris holds in the open streets on the long summer evenings. There were evidently a great many English in Paris just then. The mother-tongue was recognized ever and anon. Young English ladies, occurred in twos and threes, who were best not in the streets at that time of the night, but whom all this splendour had tempted out, trusting to their own innocence and each other's protection. 'English Spoken'—the equivalent to 'Ici on parle Français'—was on many of the shop-windows; and less happy Englishmen were staying, worn and overworked, till midnight, behind the counters. The Englishmen on the Boulevards were less prepossessing. There were several excursion trains at this time, and Paris was full of them. Many of them had come over with the intention of full enjoyment and freedom from ordinary restraints. This sort of thing is very well understood in Paris; you may see it plentifully caricatured in the shop-windows.

Elyot returned to the Grand Hôtel, wondering whether his friends had fixed their destination there. You may always be sure that at Paris your friends have gone to an hotel, and have not taken apartments. The Parisians do not at all understand that system of furnished lodgings to which we are so accustomed in England. Many English people, when they first come to France, from a confusion of ideas on this subject, expose themselves to much discomfort. It is very rarely that you find rooms with plates, linen, and attendance. If you want these, you must of course go to an hotel. In a private house they will let you an apartment—that is a suite of rooms more or less in number, but you must have your own 'service' and a great variety of necessaries. You may of course also employ the concierge, who in turn is employed to keep a watch upon you, for the French suspiciously think you may possibly decamp. From the obscure lodgings comes the enormous number of hotels, greater in proportion than in any other city. The Grand

Hôtel is an enormous building, in great measure supported by the English, and in still greater measure by the Americans. In travelling, the Englishman generally spends his income; but the American often expends his capital. The hotel is a little town, and has its streets and boulevards. I am afraid Mr. Elyot would vouchsafe it only limited commendation. There is a story that a man died in his room, and was not discovered for a week afterwards. The place is ill ventilated, and large quantities of chloride of lime are used. The charge for the *table d'hôte* dinner is eight francs, which is a great deal too high. For five francs ahead a perfect French dinner ought to be served. French cupidity here defeats itself. The vast semicircular *salle-à-manger*, of the dimensions of a theatre, is only occupied, even in the height of the season, to the extent of one third or one fourth. The dinner is not managed in the best way; the complaint is, that the dishes are served up too cold. One is very much disappointed in the company which in an undue proportion consists of Yankees and of Jews. In fact, with all its grandeur, the Grand Hôtel has a tendency to be vulgar.

The arrivals of the night before proved to be a patriarchal Yankee and his daughter—an elderly young lady of about fifty-nine. Mr. Elyot bore the disappointment as befitted a moral philosopher. He did not fail, within the inmost recesses of his own mind, to resemble a worthy coroner of my acquaintance, who, having perpetrated an extraordinary absurdity, shut himself up in his own room, and, after deep consideration, recorded a verdict of temporary insanity. He certainly felt himself in love with Miss Darlingford, and the feeling was of course exaggerated by the poetical and romantic element in his mind. However, let there be method in his madness. He must try and see something more of her: till he knew her better it would be absurd to declare himself. One plan alone seemed feasible: if she was travelling, let him travel in the same route. If she remained stationary,

let him obtain entrance to the society in which she moved. Exactly. But, before you deal with your animal you must first catch it. Elyot blushed when he remembered the irreverent proverb, and said to himself, that he would go and speak to Dobbs.

Dobbs lived in the Faubourg St. Honoré, a gay bachelor on the *quatrième étage*. If you meet with an Englishman resident in Paris, the chances are, that he either lives in the Faubourg St. Honoré or the Champs Elysées. Dobbs was the correspondent of one of the morning papers. He had lived in Paris these dozen years, and still maintained the bluntness and sincerity of the English character under the polished veil of Parisian manners. He was great in all Anglican matters in France. Him did Elyot discover at his eleven o'clock *déjeuner*. The English in France, he it remarked, with all their patriotism, gradually give up English hours of refection and adopt those of the French. It is always best to conform to the usages of the country in which you are staying. They are usages which experience has proved to be the best for the exigencies of the climate. At the same time, it is noticeable that the French are imbibing from the English a taste for more solid diet than that to which they have hitherto been accustomed.

'Dobbs,' said Mr. Elyot, when he had refreshed himself with a tumbler of claret, imported direct from Bordeaux, and let me say that Paris claret is, as a rule, indifferent—the best goes to England; 'Dobbs, there is a young woman travelling about France just now whom it is my intention to marry.'

Dobbs had been a great deal among young men—romantic and literary men; indeed, the terms are almost synonymous. He had practically learnt the *nil admirari* doctrine. So he composedly listened to the recital of the adventure.

'You see, my dear fellow,' he concluded, 'I have very scanty data to go upon. They are going to travel about France, and then are going where the English go; that is to say, you have to pick them out of

seventy thousand people, the population of the English in France.

'That is very difficult.'

'Not so difficult, perhaps, as you imagine. The English in France are not scattered without any rule over the country. They are easily classified, and in a classification, certain sets will be soon eliminated.'

'Give me your classification, Dobbs—you were always a generating sort of believer.'

'Practically, not theoretically. In the first place, look at the ports of France; you may be bound that a maritime people like ourselves will be found in the French harbours, Havre, Dieppe, Marseilles, Bordeaux.'

'But these are business people, surely.'

'At Marseilles, exclusively so. Only it is also the great port for Italy and all the coasts of the Mediterranean. The city is now so beautifully adorned, that it is worth while to spend a few days there and examine it. Most tourists do so. Under the imperial system it has undergone a transformation as marvellous as that of Paris: a new cathedral, a new palace, a new exchange, a new harbour, new zoological gardens; and the admirers of Dumas will go and look at the Château d'If. Here is a busy colony of the commercial English; but I suppose no Englishman lives there unless he is compelled. Now, in respect to Havre, the case is different. On a minor scale it combines both the elements of Liverpool and the elements of Brighton. Havre of course implies Honfleur. Still, on a descending scale the case is the same with Dieppe. Have you ever come to Paris by way of Havre or Dieppe?'

'I have tried both; they are two seaside places of France very familiar to all classes of Englishmen.'

'Exactly and Calais too. Well, I do not think that you need trouble yourself about these places, outlets from the Continent. Unless your friends are going out of France immediately, which is most doubtful, or by sea, which is also doubtful, you will not be at all likely to find them in these places.'

'Where are they likely to be?'

'Perhaps the old Colonel takes his bottle of port daily. He may probably be a gouty subject, and secrete no end of lithic acid. In that case he will certainly go to Vichy, if health is any object to him. Vichy is about the centre of France, and you don't know where he may radiate from there.'

'If the young lady is a medical subject,' continued the correspondent to the 'Daily Gusher,' 'she will go down to the Mediterranean. She will go there even if she is all right. It is the garden of France, and no one can do better than pass a winter there. But, heigho! she can't be there till the winter, or at least the autumn. I don't know how the troubadour withstood the minstrel and the mosquitoes in the summer. But look here, old fellow! she is sure to be in Paris for a few days. No woman ever yet passed through Paris without wanting to stay a bit. Look down the list of arrivals in Galignani's book, and you will have a good chance of seeing them. Go to the Louvre, the Luxembourg, the Tuileries, the operas, the Champs Elysées. You will certainly find them somewhere.'

Mr. Elyot acted upon this advice. The name was not down on Galignani's list, for the Darlingfords were staying out at Auteuil in company with the family of an English judge, at one of the pleasantest of the Parisian boarding-houses! Nevertheless, he caught one or two glimpses of them. Entering the Sainte Chapelle one day with a party, he was tormented with a view of the receding figures of Miss Darlingford and her father, as they left the beautiful chapel, and passed into the hall of the Palais de Justice. Again they casually met in the Louvre. A few words were exchanged. Mr. Elyot asked where they were staying, and the Colonel curtly said they were leaving Paris in a few days—going a great distance. The Professor summoned up courage to ask 'Where?' 'To the south,' said the Colonel. 'To the sea-side,' said the young lady. With this he was obliged to be content.

'Depend upon it, sir,' said his friend the journalist, 'they are going to the Biscay coast. It is a deal too hot for the Mediterranean this time of the year. They have only the Channel left, and they have expressly said they are not going there.'

In the Comedies of Aristophanes, the parabasis occurs in which, while the dramatic action is suspended, the chorus addresses the public in some remarks on things in general. I here permit myself a few remarks on the subject of my countrymen in France. The colonising genius of the English people is great, but perhaps, upon the whole, it is unhappily exhibited in the practice of founding colonies in the peopled regions of the Continent. Many English families in settling abroad appear to start from the aphorism that any country is better than their own country—a sentiment as mistaken as it is unworthy. At the conclusion of the war, the English poured into France, and travelling is certainly to be considered a most valuable kind of education. The reasons, however, which induced people to settle at Paris are now fast ceasing to exist. The place is becoming enormously dear, and dear in those items in which moderate purses are most sensitive. Generally it may be said that the luxuries of life are comparatively cheap in Paris, and the necessities comparatively dear. To keep your horse or to keep your carriage, though one-third dearer now than ten years ago, can still be done at a cheaper rate than in London. A box at the opera is only half the cost. Wine is cheaper, but the wine is not so good. House rent is enormously high. You have to pay eight hundred a year in Paris for the same accommodation for which you would give in London four hundred. Wood is much dearer. Coal is about two pounds a ton. For butchers' meat you pay from one to two francs a pound; the *fillet* two and a half francs. The high prices of Paris are extending to the provincial towns, and France is becoming a very dear country. Brittany is perhaps an exception to this. There you can still live very

cheaply, even where the English are gregarious, and you may live cheaply in almost any country place where you are content to live solitarily. English people who go over to Jersey generally make the run to St. Malo's, and see something of Brittany. There is a regular English colony at Dinan, and it must be admitted that Dinan is exceedingly picturesque. Avanches is a similar place. The English colonies at Versailles and Chantilly may claim splendid sites, but these represent charms that often enough pall upon the resident. St. Germain-en-Laye has the noble terrace which, to the memory of the unhappy James II., recalled Richmond Hill, though the prospect is by no means so rich. Since 1848 it has declined; the disturbances at Paris extended even here. People felt uncomfortable, and went away. I am perfectly certain that for comfort, cleanliness, and economy, an English provincial town is greatly superior to a French provincial town. The education of an English provincial grammar school has a substantial value hardly possessed by a French *lycée*. The ordinary five-franc medical fee is low, but you are now expected at some time to make the doctor a handsome present, which about adjusts the equilibrium. As a rule, a prolonged residence in Paris is not the best thing in the world for young people. A young lady, familiar with the excitements of Paris life, will not very easily settle down into the character of English wife and mother. I am not speaking of special cases, where a man settles down in France in pursuance of some direct path that invites him there: nor yet of the case of invalids who may desire the highest benefit from French mineral waters, from the mild climates of the south, or from the simple fact of travelling. But the system of English people settling down in France because they think too lightly of their own country, or imagine they will procure a better education for their children, and think that their means may go farther, is a mistake, and ought to be condemned. We cer-

tainly pay the French a compliment which they are very far from reciprocating. I have never met with, or heard of any French family settling in England for the pure and simple reason of being in England. Our lot is apportioned us by a higher wisdom than our own, and it would be best for us not to relieve ourselves from the conditions and obligations of our birth, but to make the best of them. There are some British families settled abroad who can speak of their country and her institutions in terms of bitter hostility. It is an evil sign when a man with a cosmopolitan turn of mind determines to do in Paris as the Parisians do; for the Parisians frequently 'do' after a most objectionable kind. An Englishman ought not to be ashamed of his faith, especially now, when a strong persecuting spirit exists against the Protestants; and he ought to be too proud of the English character, which foreigners, with meanest flattery envy, imitate, and admire, to wish for a moment to denationalize himself.

To some extent Professor Elyot had now definitely made up his mind. He made the occasional journey to Bayonne. He was then at once at Biarritz. The place was full. The Empress was there. Elyot turned aside to look at the imperial residence; quiet, of moderate size, built of English brick, which has rendered it a costly affair. There were a great many English at Bayonne. Pau is near at hand, and Pau is a regular colony of the health and pleasure-seeking English. Bayonne and Biarritz are almost together, only six or seven miles apart. It is impossible to conceive a more beautiful country than that which belongs to them. It will not, perhaps, be too bold to prophesy that Biarritz will one day be the most fashionable and prosperous watering-place in Europe. The climate is delightful, and I should think better adapted for invalids than that of Provence. The air is as mild, and at the same time more bracing. Nothing can be more splendid than the view of the Spanish coast and of the Pyrenees. The place is generally full

of Spaniards till the arrival of the Empress and the French court, and then the Spaniards take flight. There is not much boating at Biarritz; the Bay of Biscay is proverbially too rough for anything of the kind. Nevertheless the visitors wellnigh live in the water, the mildness of the temperature preventing any inconvenient results. It was quite on the cards that Professor Elyot might find Alice Darlingford floating on the waves with a gay company of ladies and gentlemen, buoyed up with corks and bladders, trousered, and protected from the heat. Biarritz has generally a great number of English residents. They pass the winter in Pau, and come down to the coast for the summer. Indeed from the contiguity of the mountains all kinds of climates lie within a given compass, and afford a most delightful variety.

Mr. Elyot did not fail to disport himself on the summer waters. He carefully investigated the rocks and caverns of the coast. He partook of the green oysters of Bayonne with approbation, and took some interest in laying down the new beds. Still, before all, he was eager in his quest; but it was fruitless. Determined to make a full investigation of the ground, he took a flying trip to Arcachon. He walked in that noble forest where in the warmest day of summer you may obtain coolness, and in the coldest day of winter you may obtain warmth. The place is admirably adapted either for a summer or a winter residence; the English would probably find it cheaper than at Biarritz. Here Mr. Elyot went fishing, or rather went harpooning, for even the sole is not thought too small a fish for the harpoon. It must be acknowledged that Mr. Elyot enjoyed this nomad existence, and all the better for the spice of romance with which he had managed to invest it. A *Saturday Reviewer* has laid down the dictum that life is not worth having without a little romance. Without arguing the position, I only say that Mr. Elyot did not fail to nourish that which had fallen to his lot.

He retraced his steps to Bayonne,

and, taking an omnibus, arrived the same evening at Biarritz. He had been absent nearly a week, for he had included in the excursion a flying investigation of Bordeaux, in which we have not had space to follow him. The English flag was waving in token that it had been an excellent vintage, and Mr. Elyot gave a liberal order on the promising look of matters. On his return to his old quarters at the hotel he looked at the names, and there, to his excessive wonderment and joy, he beheld, and could scarcely believe his eyes, 'Colonel and Miss Darlingford.' He made inquiries, and almost hoped to find them in the saloon. He was miserably disappointed. They had gone away the day before yesterday.

Whither had they gone? There was a place in the book of the hotel to indicate the next destination of the traveller. Alas! this was not filled up. His own name was on the next page. Perhaps the Colonel had seen it, and had declined to furnish him with any further information. Perhaps his name might have caused their departure. He wandered about Biarritz in the vague hope of finding some traces. There was a great show of Parisian belles dressed in light summer, gossamer attire, as elegantly as for a drive down the Avenue de l'Impératrice in May. Publicity, and not retirement, is the idea of a French watering-place. Even the villa of the Empress is overlooked, and her Majesty herself may be observed bathing in the water. Mr. Elyot was without any means of identifying any friend of the Darlingfords among his compatriots. He returned to the hotel to make inquiries. A chambermaid was quite positive that she heard the young lady say that they were going on to Pau. A waiter was quite confident that they had taken a conveyance to St. Sebastian. Giving one more glance at the list, Mr. Elyot saw slightly pencilled in a delicate hand, 'Pau,' a tracing so indistinct that it had escaped his notice. To Pau accordingly he determined to go. He was strongly pressed by some friends he had

made, to stay and see the bull-fight. This was of course being got up on account of the Empress, but, with that illustrious exception, public taste did not seem strongly in favour of tauromachy. He went on to Pau.

But he found Pau all but empty. On his way he passed through Orthez, famous in the wars of the Black Prince, and, four hundred years later, for the wars of the Iron Duke. To enjoy this country one ought to be familiar with two works, 'The Chronicles of Froissart' and 'The Peninsular War' of Colonel Napier. The climate of Pau is remarkable for peculiar stillness of atmosphere, which has a sedative effect, the opposite of the climate of Nice, which is peculiarly exciting. At the end of March the oaks begin to be in bloom, and at Christmas the leaves are still drooping on the trees. Pau is celebrated as the birthplace of Henry IV. and Bernadotte: each king to regain a crown renounced his religion: the one from a Protestant became a Romanist: the other from a Romanist became a Protestant. Pau has also memories of the saintly Jeanne of Navarre, who in her best days so nobly redeemed the fault of the *Heptameron*. Of all famous terrace views the view from the terrace of the Castle of Pau is perhaps the most famous, terminated in the blue distance by the long sierras of the mountains. The castle, refitted by the care of Louis-Philippe, abounds with historical souvenirs of the great Bearnese. Having waited here for five or six days he determined to seek the hills. If he had only waited half an hour longer he would have found them.

Professor Elyot therefore travelled about in the Western Pyrenees. There he would be sure of meeting his countrymen in the various mountain watering-places, though in numbers greatly less than in Switzerland. He was equally certain of not finding them if he followed in the wake of some modern travellers, and explored also the Eastern Pyrenees. He would work up the country and then diverge to Toulouse. By that time the autumn

would be fairly set in. He would then leave the vast plain of Languedoc for the sea-side, and pass along from town to town of the famous shore of Provence. It appeared to him that sooner or later he must meet with them in the Pyrenees. The chances were most decidedly that they were travelling that way. Supposing that he missed them, there would be another decided chance that they would be wintering at Cannes, or Mentone, or Nice, or Hyères. Avoiding all mystery, we may state at once that the Professor had acutely divined the exact state of the case. He had sketched out their very programme. They were, in fact, constantly on each other's trail, and the wonder is that they did not meet earlier than they did. The point that confused Elyot was this: that the Darlingfords did actually deviate from their plan. Alice strongly pressed to keep within it; and it had been arranged that they should proceed to Pau *en route* for Eaux Bonnes, but at the last moment the Colonel decided on 'a dash into Spain' for four or five days, which was accordingly done. Hence it was that for a long time Elyot could find no traces. While they were quietly following in his track he was hunting them from place to place.

A few words on the Pyrenean watering-places will suffice. They are easily reached, the one from the other, and have a common character. A *cul de sac* of trees forces you to retrace your steps. From Pau to Eaux Bonnes is twenty-three miles. It is an ascent along the span of the Pyrenees, along enchanting scenery, by the side of rivers of crystal clearness, fringed by flowering turf, shaded by dark chestnut woods. Then in the trough of the mountains, wedged into the clefts of the rugged rocks, are the watering-places. In these watering-places an astonishing number of people are found who look and really are dreadfully ill; and many others, fresh, gay, and talkative, concerning whom it is difficult to believe that sanitary considerations have drawn them to these heights. In the morning, while the dew is yet fresh on the mountain

lawns, it is customary to take the waters; then come long expeditions, prolonged dinners in which the *iz-zard* makes a prominent appearance on the bill of fare, music and pleasant talk in the salons at night. From Les Eaux Bonnes to Les Eaux Chaudes is a bridle-path along the foaming Gave, cascades falling from lofty precipices, and the road leaving the river stretches along through the dark pine forest. Let us enumerate a few others of these brunnens, buried in ravines and shadowed by the mountains. Cauterets is very famous, and here the mountains nearly meet overhead. There are here twelve springs of water, on which patients repose great faith, with the odour of sulphur and stinking eggs. This is a great place for Spaniards. Retracing your steps to Pierrefitte the grand defile of a mountain gorge takes you to Luz: Luz, where the English have never come in sufficient numbers to spoil the primitive simplicity. The extortions to which we are so familiar in Switzerland are almost unknown here, but would pastoral virtue be able to resist an immigration of tourists? From Luz to Barèges was the next step. The fine tissues so called are not made at Barèges, any more than Stilton cheese is made at Stilton or Damascus blades manufactured at Damascus. They are made at Bagnères, and command a higher price than in London. The waters here are really of the most valuable kind, and the supply is unequal to the demand for them. It is a great place for gun-shot wounds, and the French government has erected here a military hospital. The title of Chief of the Brunnen would probably be conceded to Bagnères de Bigorre, and with this should be coupled Bagnères de Luchon.

The French side of the Pyrenees is less imposingly magnificent than the Spanish side. Owing to the more southern latitude, the line of perpetual snow is higher than in Switzerland. There is a prevailing character of sylvan beauty. And though there is much rugged sublimity, yet this is not the leading feature. Elyot took many excursions

among the mountains. Occasionally an Englishman would accompany him, but he found the Frenchman an unenterprising traveller, who preferred to revive Parisian life in these distant places, and had lazy wonder for the energy and hardihood of the national ally. Occasionally, on his mule or pony, he passed through gorges that reminded him of the *Via Mala*, a gorge that in itself was frequently a *via mala*. Sometimes his path would be over vast, soft, springy meadow land, by the side of brawling rivulets, vast forests stretching around him, forests of the fir, the pine, and the box-tree. Suddenly the rocks would shelve up to a huge, bare, perpendicular height which renders explorations dangerous. It will be remembered how Professor Hardwicke, of Cambridge, lately lost his life in these perilous regions. Elyot even essayed, though unsuccessfully, to climb the sublime Maladetta, loftiest of Pyrenean peaks, which for purposes of complete exploration may well be recommended to a detachment of the Alpine Club. Sometimes in his thoughtful loneliness he would hear amid the mountains those strange and mysterious voices which have so much perplexed men of science—dull, intermittent sounds escaping from the laboratory of nature. Sometimes he would meet the wretched *cagot*, the race held accursed, and wellnigh perished off the face of the earth, through barbarous dislike and persecution. He reached that famous configuration of rocks where a kind of window is opened in the mountains, and, as if in a natural mirror, the land of Spain lay before him in wild repellent tumbled hills. The scenery sometimes assumes a Swiss and Norwegian caste. Those who have read Georges Sand's last work but one, '*L'Homme de Neige*,' that wonderful work of an old lady of sixty-five—written, I trust, in the serene evening of a passion-darkened life—will derive, I think, from those accurate but purely imaginative descriptions—for Georges Sand has never visited those regions—a vivid impression of the sterner portions of Pyrenean scenery. There is a want of

broad spaces of waters, yet he visited such lakes or rather mountain tarns as were accessible, the Lac d'Oo and the Lac de Gaube. This last lake has an unhappy interest belonging to it, from the fact of a young and newly-married pair being drowned in crossing, a few months after their marriage. Such then are the scenes of the lonely wanderings with which Mr. Elyot described the social life of the different brunnens. In these active pursuits his healthy frame and his healthy mind were free from any morbid taint of disappointed passion. Wandering about amid these new regions, his brief intercourse with Alice seemed at times only the vivid impression of a dream, and he found himself repeating Shelley's fine lines :

'Lost, lost, for ever lost
In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep
That beautiful shape ! Doth the dark gate of
death
Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,
O Sleep ?'

No dream from the ivory gate, but the 'sweet human lips and eyes' of the lady of his love greeted him one evening when he returned to his hotel at Luchon, after one of his long rambles to the mountains. It was

now late in the season, and the Darlingfords had arrived at Luchon, and were trying to sketch out a plan to visit Toulouse and proceed to Mentone for the winter. Mr. Elyot heard with concern that, though troubled with no positive illness, the extreme delicacy of Miss Darlingford rendered a residence in balmy Provence desirable. They were almost the only English visitors now left in Luchon ; and even the gruff Colonel deigned to hail the *rencontre* with feelings of satisfaction. And now that brief episode of romance which had visited the Professor's learned life, as fitfully it visits for a season the lives of most men, was drawing to a close. He took an early opportunity of mentioning to the Colonel his name and position. He found that the Colonel fully appreciated his position ; and, to his infinite delight, that the young lady was very partial to his volume of poetry. He proved of real use in helping them to arrange their plans. He accompanied them to Mentone, and stayed there till the last hour that his winter duties would permit. When he left it was with the full understanding that he should return at Christmas.

APRÈS LE BAL.

(A 'DETRIMENTAL'S' REMINISCENCE OF 'THE GUARDS' BALL.')

SO, *bella mia*, you've made an impression,
And turned half the heads of the critical town ;
And tell me the truth now you hear the confession
If not with a smile at least not with a frown.
No wonder your triumph—if radiant beauty,
Enhanced by a toilette the *crème de la crème*,
Could fail to achieve a girl's paramount duty,
To use your own phrase, dear, it *would* be a shame !
You fancied me miles away peacefully reading,
But I saw you, *signora*, and only last night,
In the *deux-temps* with Vivian de Vere you were speeding,
And your gauzy clouds brushed against me in your flight.
The part of a wall-flower I humbly was filling,
And I did not announce myself, for, who could tell,
Perhaps my reception by you had been chilling,
And I wished not to break the old magical spell.
For although I speak in this volatile fashion,
I'm vulgar enough to possess, dear, a heart ;
And the sweet dream of deepest, unchangeable passion
From that heart's inward feeling will never depart.

Since the time when your childhood gave tenderest token
Of the virtues and graces that make up your dower,
The chain was linked round me no more to be broken,
My allegiance has never once swerved for an hour!

I saw you whirl by, never thinking or dreaming
I saw you, the loveliest *demoiselle* there;
I watched the rich diamond-spray brilliantly gleaming
And sparkling amid the dark bands of your hair.
In a ball-room, romance, as one justly supposes,
Is quite out of place, still I was so bold,
As to wish those dark tresses enwreathed with white roses,
The simple white blossoms you loved well of old.

I suppose your lace drapery is of the rarest,
And the broiders that deck it of fabulous worth,
Yet, *ma mignonne*, I think that I held you the fairest
In your plain country dress with its loveable dearth
Of costly emblazons and ornament golden,
And I worshipped you more in that sweet, simple guise,
When from under the round hat, in days dear and olden,
Flashed forth the soft light of those exquisite eyes!

For you have unchangingly been my one vision
Of happiness seen through the vista of time;
Belgravian *flaneurs* may smile in derision,
I care not as long as you see this poor rhyme.
May I say with what hope and what joy I shall cherish
The dream of a future shared, darling, with you?
That dream—that reality never need perish
If but to yourself, love, you only be true.

ARTISTS' NOTES FROM CHOICE PICTURES.

Wilkie's 'Village Holiday.'

A GOOD picture, like good wine, mellows by keeping. Within limits, of course. You may keep your wine or your picture till it has acquired a priceless value for the connoisseur, but be utterly distasteful to the uninitiated. The *Village Festival* is of the kind that keeps well. It is more than half a century old, yet it has as grateful a flavour, its native unexaggerated raciness is as much relished, and its popularity as universal as when it came fresh from the easel.

Though he had been three years occupied upon it, Wilkie was not twenty-six when he gave to the picture the last finishing touches, and sent it forth to win the applause or face the censure of the critics and the public. It achieved a success which might be called surprising as

the work of so young a man, had not the young man, three or four years before, secured the foremost place in his chosen line.

Wilkie has left in his journals a fuller record of the progress of this than of any other of his pictures. Commencing with the first entry, August 3rd, 1808, when, being too ill to keep an appointment, he writes—'To amuse myself, began to make a blot of the *Public-House Door*, the subject I intend to paint next;' he registers, with dry particularity, his daily doings, till he brought it almost to completion. We read how, wishing to give an air of quiet rusticity to the scene, he called on Haydon one fine May morning, and they went together to Paddington 'to look after a public-house that might do for the picture,'



WILKIE'S "VILLAGE HOLIDAY."

[See "Artists' Notes from Choice Pictures."

and, little as we might expect it, they 'found one that may be of service.' Paddington would be about the last place a painter would go to in search of the pleasant or picturesque now, but it was very different then. Oddly enough we find Lysons, in his account of Paddington, published in the very year that Wilkie went there in search of a rural alehouse, speaking with surprise of its rusticity. Writing of Westbourne Place, he says: 'The situation is extremely pleasant, and so uncommonly retired, that a person residing there could scarcely conceive himself to be in a parish adjoining that of St. George's, Hanover Square.' Fifty years have passed away, and Paddington, like *Bottom*, has been translated.

Having found his alehouse, Wilkie sets himself to paint with a will. And as he proceeds, he jots down, with almost lawyer-like baldness and unconcern, his daily work; how he 'began by rubbing in all the shadows with umber, and the lights with white, and succeeded in getting in the principal group'—a beginning of which a student of the old school will at once recognize the reality: how he 'tried a new way of proceeding by touching the colour in a much more delicate manner, and produced a good deal of that mellowness which he had so often admired in Sir Joshua.' how 'he began painting at ten; went on with the woman leading away her husband, and put in the group of people paying the pot-girl behind, which occupied him till four.' how 'Haydon came to breakfast and approved of what he had done.' or else, how Haydon, or Callcott, or Segneur, or Sir George Beaumont, disapproved of some particular group, or expression, or colour, or piece of drapery, which he altered accordingly, and generally, for the time at least, fancied he had improved by the alteration: or else, how, failing to produce the effect he intended, he was 'therefore obliged to rub out all he had done these two days;' and so on to the end.

Again, he records the trouble he has had to find a suitable model, male or female, or perchance 'a smock-frock, such as he wanted for

his principal figure'—for he can paint nothing as yet without the actual object before him,—and he does not fail to record when he finds the smock-frock, 'on his way home from town' (he was living at this time in Sol's Row, Hampstead Road) that he 'purchased it for thirteen shillings.' Very seldom do we meet with so jubilant a note as when he has 'hit upon an alteration in the large window and staircase in the background, which has produced a wonderful improvement.' These entries may seem trivial, but how thoroughly they mark the character of the man and the painter; his perfect simplicity and sincerity of purpose; his care even in the smallest details; the veracity which compelled him, as it were, to give only what he himself saw, and felt, and understood, and his openness to conviction: in a word, the healthy tone of quiet enjoyment in his work which is so evident in all his earlier pictures!

The finished picture was not sent to the Academy, though he had just been elected R.A., but formed the leading feature of an exhibition of 'the pictures painted by D. Wilkie, R.A.,' held 'at 87 Pall Mall: admission, one shilling; catalogues, gratis.' And here an odd accident befel it. The person of whom he hired the room was in arrears with his landlord, and the *Village Holiday*, as it was now called, was distrained for rent. The trouble and vexation of this incident are said to have suggested to Wilkie—always on the look out for a new subject—his capital picture, *Distraining for Rent*; the broker, the lawyer's clerk, and some of the other personages in which are veritable effigies of those who had acted in the like capacities at his own distrait.

It will have been noticed that, at first, Wilkie speaks of his picture as the *Public-House Door*. It was plainly his purpose then to paint some such scene of roystering mirth as might be witnessed any day outside a village inn. As he proceeds, the title is changed to the *Alehouse Door*, perhaps as a shade more polite in sound, for Wilkie was now the favourite of the upper order, and eschewed all such vulgarities as his

Pitlessie Fair. Then it becomes the *Village Holiday*, and eventually the *Village Festival*, perhaps from some notion of rivalry or parallelism with the Village Festivals of Teniers or Ostade, of whom he was always thinking. Whatever was the inducement, it was an unlucky change. The *Village Holiday* exactly expresses the character of the scene; festival is far too large and pretentious a word for a few holiday-makers gathered round about a village alchouse.

As the representation of a village holiday, the picture is admirable. It is, however, rather the picture of a reflective observer than a genial carouser, of a gentlemanly note-maker than a participant in the mirth. Teniers and Ostade painted their village festivals and drinking scenes with a sense of enjoyment that is irresistible. They like the fun they set before us, and are not mere reporters of what they saw. If they had not had to paint the scene, they would have been sharers in the merriment. But if Wilkie's picture is deficient, as a whole, in geniality, it is true and just as far as the insight of the painter reaches; admirable in detached groups, and exquisite in individual heads, and, withal, it is needless to add, honestly and excellently painted.

In the woodcut, our artist has brought together the best heads from the different groups. At the top are the half-drunken rustic with the smock-frock, whom Wilkie always speaks of as 'the principal figure,' and his wife, who is trying to drag him away from his riotous companions, from whom he parts with unmistakable reluctance. Detached, the man's head loses something of its character; but on the whole it is the least satisfactory in the admirable group of which it is the centre. Wilkie acknowledged that this head 'puzzled him beyond everything,' and that he 'could not get satisfied with it.' The wife is an exquisite conception. She is still pretty—the outline is handsomer in the sketch than in Wilkie's picture—but her face is worn and anxious, her dress untidy. The village belle has been mated to one who was in his youth

the village beau; but the club-room has proved more attractive than the home, and here are the old signs of a dissipated husband making a slatternly wife. The mischief has as yet only reached the first stage. Alone, his case would seem hopeless; but there is a something in her face that leads us to believe that there are better days in store for both.

The landlord on the left, pouring out ale with the air of one who knows the exact height and the precise angle at which to poise the bottle and manœuvre the glass, is a jolly, ruddy, well-to-do specimen of a host of the olden time. He does not disdain to crack a joke even with these tipsy revellers, to the intense delight of the negro, who roars out his admiration so lustily as to call down upon himself a rebuke from the countryman who is waiting for his ale. The old dame, whose pale sad face contrasts so strikingly with the rubicund visage of the landlord, is, in the picture, standing by the pump, looking mournfully at the sot, her son, who is stretched at length beside the horse-trough.

The head on the extreme right is that of the half-drunken maunderer sitting at the table by the landlord. Liston sat for him, and Wilkie was amazingly puzzled to hit off the right expression. Several times he painted out the head and painted it in again—sometimes trying 'a new expression,' sometimes, at Haydon's suggestion, 'putting a little more drunkenness into the looks.' It is a very characteristic head. Not exactly a portrait of Liston—Wilkie never painted exactly a portrait—but with a look very like what Liston wore sometimes on the stage, and more often, of late years, in private, but lacking that queer turn into which he would, when in rare good-humour, crumple up his unparalleled phiz. The confirmed reckless tippler is in every line of this blowsy sot. As he holds up the bottle to judge of the quality and condition of the liquor he seems ready to troll out—

'Back and side go bare, go bare,
Both hand and foot go cold;
So I stuff my skin brimfull within
Of jolly good ale and old.'

RECOLLECTIONS OF ALMACK'S.

BY A CHAPERON.

THE reminiscences of other ladies of a certain age are, I dare say, like my own, not so fresh as they were some twenty years ago. Like my complexion, my memory has lost its freshness. Ah! formerly I could recollect every dance I danced, and with whom: every new waltz the band played: every compliment the favourite partners of the evening uttered; and these still flicker in my remembrance. But, no, I will not rehearse the flattering hints, rather than assertions, which called up the blushes of my youth. Some, I do remember, laid the delightful varnish of flattery on with a thick coating, so coarse that I shrank from its application. Others, still worse, put it on with a trowel: others just dashed it in with a delicate camel-hair pencil. The appetite of youth for praise is fastidious. I could now stand the trowel, since I feel that I am, if not a wreck—the favourite expression for bygone beauties—at all events only a ruin in a state of restoration.

Let me, however, bring back in fancy those days when the light tendrils of my hair had neither a tinge of gray, nor an invisible reinforcement of false locks among them; when my teeth had never been exhibited to Cartwright's piercing gaze and remorseless hand, and when my complexion needed not the aid of pearl-powder, and could boldly face daylight.

Those were the days of the Regency. I do not intend to be historical, and I write merely as a chaperon who has seen many faces,—many fond ones, come and go, and bloom and fade in those dingy old rooms of Willis's. My recollections have little to do with Courts, but much with that feminine oligarchy to whose decrees the world of fashion then bowed submissively. For the sake of my granddaughters, however, to whom the word 'Almack's' needs an explanation, I will here say a word or two about its first establishment.

There has never been known a period so conservative in the privileges of rank and birth—so oblivious of those of character, as that of the Prince Regent. I name him thus distinctively as the only royal Regent this country has had. It was in *his* time that the moneyed interests of this country came forward auspiciously, and claimed their due position in the Senate and the regal palace. Boroughs, it is true, were still bought and sold, and no man who was not thoroughly independent could afford to have and to hold a political conscience. Yet the days of conservatism were even then doomed. The country gentleman, heir to a line of stout heroes in top-boots, whose eldest sons had represented the borough of Noodleburgh for some centuries, as a sort of inheritance, was beginning to sleep badly. The shouts at Reform meetings rang in his ears—the word 'disfranchisement' lay at his heart. After-dinner conversations turned upon vested rights, agitation, and democratic speakers; and 'the mob,' 'the rabble,' were referred to with red faces and curling lips. The creed of those gentry consisted, after Church and State, of course, in a thorough respect for game, in a hatred of education for the vulgar, who, if they *were* vulgar, had no right to be anything else; and in a virtuous horror of the three R's—Repeal, Reform, and Retrenchment; and their wives and daughters took up the tone.

Such were the sentiments of those who one may consider to occupy the *entresol* in the mansions of good society, whilst those *au premier* went even a little further.

Women are usually the earliest to take alarm at any changes. Their nature is essentially conservative. The ladies of England were the first to realize the fact that a shadow was creeping over the aristocracy of the land: wealth was eclipsing the peerage. As the hereditary diamonds which blazed on a

countess's brow were dimmed by the tiara of a Lady Mayoress, so the social position seemed to be enshrouded in a slight mist, whilst a broader daylight displayed the once modest colouring of the rich, but middle classes—'those sort of people!' as Lady Gentian—poor Lady Gentian, blue and bitter as her floral namesake—used to call them.

In a spirit of self-defence, therefore, was the venerable and now defunct institution of Almack's established. Ranelagh had long been razed and forgotten: Vauxhall was out of fashion: Cremorne existed not: private balls were ruinous: so a certain community of high-bred ladies resolved to concoct a plan which should keep out 'those sort of people!' and include the first-class passengers in this long journey of life, alone, in its scheme. All the porcelain was to be fine, and of unimpeachable fabric, without blemish or crack, in reputation;—fair, too, and gracious, and graceful in exterior—such, in short, as one sees 'in king's houses,' and such alone.

Who can say that these ladies were wrong? Each class has a right to its own peculiar enjoyments, and in its own way. I was once spending a winter near a country town. 'How do you amuse yourself in the dead, cold season?' I asked, whilst a nice, *genteel* young lady from the great millinery establishment of the place was trying on my dress.

A flutter—a smile—a blush—a pin put in too far: 'We dance sometimes,' she replied, fitting on a sleeve.

'Dance! So you've balls?'

'Yes, ma'am—we had last winter; but I am afraid this winter there will be none.'

'Why? What a pity!'

'Yes, ma'am; and a great disappointment' (a sigh: some youth, thought I, rising a mercer and a man, as the *de profundis* of that young heart).

'But the balls became so mixed?'

'Yes, ma'am. There was no drawing a line. We could not exclude buttermen and cheesemon-

gers: *that* ruined the Slip-Slopper-ton Town Balls. Butchers and their families,' she pursued, with trembling horror, 'never pretended to ask for tickets; though I must say Mr. and Mrs. Suett are quite independent people. But we couldn't help Mr. and Mrs. Creamly, and the Miss Creamlys—perhaps you know the "Ship," ma'am, in Wool-comber Street?—coming with their foreman; and if we let *them* in we might let in everybody.'

Ah! true! and so it was with Almack's. Sternly tenacious of its rights, protected by an oligarchy of lofty patronesses, the great design prospered; and those who often knew each other, and who suited each other, enjoyed themselves in those far-famed rooms with a cordon of exclusion around the doors. It was not until after the opera that you left your carriage in the dingy street below, and ascended, treading on a worn-out stair-carpet, to the scene of Almack's revels. The suite of rooms, including a disrobing-room, a card-room, a tea-room, and a ball-room, was well adapted to its purpose. It was the more appreciated because in London houses there is a lamentable deficiency of separate ball-rooms, such as we find in large, aristocratic German capitals, where every lady who gives balls adapts one room in her house, or palace, to that purpose alone; and for that it is kept—rarely inhabited when the carnival is over—swept, and closed, and only cleaned and opened when the carnival comes round again. Then, and then only, are the *Persiennes* thrown open, the *parquet* rubbed and varnished, the gilding carefully cleaned; and the festive assembly takes place in a room not worn, and used up, and faded, and dusty, but fresh, and fit for festive purposes.

Almack's had almost a venerable aspect of decay and of London dirt—a thing *sui generis*, when its lofty and lovely patronesses first swept across its floor. Their diamonds sparkled beneath the blaze of old-fashioned chandeliers: their dresses were contrasted with dusky walls and furniture. The main room was

spacious nevertheless—lofty, and well adapted to the delicious sounds of Weippert's or of Gow's band. It was not too large: you could see everyone, and be seen. If it had not the splendour of modern subscription-rooms at a watering-place, or in some provincial and commercial city, whose opulence and magnificence are unequalled, it had one advantage—that it had not the appearance of a newly got up and dearly paid for institution. Its general aspect was like that of some of its patronesses—medieval. 'Here we are,' said these dusty walls to us, in after days, 'the representatives of many lustres of aristocratic enjoyments: our discoloured ceiling has surmounted many a coroneted head: scions of nobility have been glad to rest their forms against our mouldings: for years we harboured all, or nearly all, the *grandes dames* of our metropolis: our list of visitants was a running peerage: our blooming parterre of dancers was never without a sprinkling of dukes: marquises were gay and gorgeous as tiger-lilies in a bed of summer flowers; earls like tulips; viscounts and barons thick like annuals grown up from seeds of last year's scattering; baronets and honourables were as common as weeds.'

And so it was; but so never will it be again. Times are altered; and Almack's in another half-century will be an object not of recollection but of research.

It grew, however, into celebrity at once. Among its earliest patronesses are names still flourishing as green bay trees among us: those, then, of young, and beautiful, and respected matrons full of a lofty consciousness of what their rank entitled to grant and to refuse, but, with one or two well-known exceptions, not disposed to overrate their privileges, or to exclude well-born and well-conducted competitors from the charmed precincts of their rule. At Almack's, it must be avowed, was the haunt, for a long time, of a clique: youth and beauty, rank and fortune, claimed an entrance. 'They are not of us,' was the reply; 'we do not know them.' 'What!' reflected the mothers of these titled

beauties. 'What! those fair girls, with the fresh complexions, come up from the country with the strength of milkmaids! Am I to admit them to make my daughters look pale and worn?' 'Mr. Burly, of Burly, presents his compliments to the Marchioness of —, and requests the favour of tickets for Almack's on the 13th of —.' 'Ridiculous! the man has ten children, I hear, and has been, or is, an ironmaster in some place in Wales.' 'But his eldest son,' whispered a friend, 'is an eldest son—twenty-five thousand a year to begin with. It is not doing justice to the young ladies, my Lady, to refuse him admittance.' 'Very well, let him come. There, I have signed a ticket: write the name. And what is an ironmaster, pray?—a sort of superior blacksmith, or a wholesale ironmonger, or what? Oh! mines! foundries! Dear me! I recollect: Burly of Burly. Are there two of them? Give tickets for two: even a younger son and ten thousand a year would be something. We are so poor, and those sort of people' (with a sigh) 'so rich!'

One of the patronesses, of a gentle nature, is listening—see her, in her rich satin peignoir and delicate lace cap—to a suitor in her boudoir in St. James's Square.

'Your ladyship will do what you like,' a young man was saying: 'of course I submit. The Canterdowns are neighbours of mine, and have led off the ball with every county member for the last ten years. I don't hesitate to say they are the best canvassers at an election I ever knew; but if you do not care to admit them, take your own way.'

It was the handsome heir apparent of that house—the future earl, who pleaded.

'Well, if I *must* have my ball full of bobbin-net and white satin, to please you, and because the dear Secretary for the Colonies—your father's friend, I mean—declares people are talking of a dissolution—How many Canterdowns did you say? Three! It makes me ill. Here's to the three graces. And they'll *all* come, no doubt, with a mother that will stamp the

room,' looking reproachfully at her son. 'I hope they haven't such a thing as a father, you wretch!'

'And why not? There, write their names;' and she fills up, 'Mrs. Canterdown, Miss Eleanora, Miss Sabrina, Miss Imogen Canterdown.' 'Thank you.'

'Oh, my dear! don't you know one might mistake a mother and her daughters, looking, as dear Byron says,

'A mother, with her daughters and her nieces,
Look, like a guinea and seven-shilling pieces;'

but a father, with his broad shoulders and double white cravat, with his "My Lord's" and "My Lady's," and a son, — a young assuming man, full of vulgarity and assurance, will always betray the women. I mean nothing improper. Go, dear Fribbleton, and remember this is the last time I give your people tickets.'

'I won't promise, my dear lady. Remember the state of affairs.'

'Ah! that odious Reform Bill; it will ruin the country, and Almack's!' cried the countess, signing her name in a large, scrawling hand, which those who best knew her understood well. It denoted great wrath.

Away goes Lord Fribbleton to his country friends. Those were the days of cabriolets, of white reins, and *perle-gris* gloves. We are all for muscularity, for undress now: then the most exquisite appliances to the outer man were essential: rich satin ties; richer waistcoats; coats of super-superfine cloth; hats of the most undoubted and finest beaver; rings, and pins, and then studs, and watch-seals, delicious, — were *de rigueur*. The Petersham school had scarcely gone out: the D'Orsay school was coming in. Away drives Lord Fribbleton in his cabriolet, with his spanking horse treading, as his groom remarks, 'like a hemperor,' and drives till he stops at the door of a good solid family hotel in Albemarle Street. Large faces peep out from the drawing-room window: the visages of the three Miss Canterdowns, old young ladies who had been the fast leaders of *ton* in their

own country set, appear, and Lord Fribbleton shuddered as he saw them; he leaves his card and the tickets, looks bewitching, and, feeling that he had done a day's work of duty, bows, and hurries onwards. Other anecdotes were current in those days, that a certain viscountess, a lady patroness, was under the influence of her lady's-maid, and that a *douceur* to that functionary might smooth objections and procure tickets. There is no answering for one's best friend: — at all events people *did* creep in whose presence was never calculated upon by the more rigid of the patronesses; and the deterioration which afterwards took place was ascribed to political motives and to the lady *canaille* of electioneering constituents. It was in the decline of the Petersham rule that Almack's rose, and when D'Orsay fled to Paris that it sank. Not that the two events had anything to do with each other. It was by women's influence that Almack's originated: by women's influence that it became imperial in fashion: by women's mistakes, in fact, that it fell. Lord Petersham, latterly known as the Earl of Harrington, might be seen in those famous assemblies in his cutaway, silk-lined tail-coat; his four inches of waistcoat; his exquisite cambric frill; his rare ornaments of jewels, in which he delighted, wearing rings even on his thumbs as well as his fingers: his polished pumps might be seen on those chalked floors; his white kid gloves touch with gentle grace the tips of a duchess's finger; his studied bow, his perfect address he, for a time, admired and imitated, for he indeed was worthy of the Court of Louis XIV. of France than of that of our homely George III.; but his presence or his absence could very faintly affect the stability of such a *puissance* as that of Almack's: then he married, and was undone — undone, I mean, as a *parti*, and as a target for dowagers' aims, to shoot at; and presently he vanishes from fashion's sphere, and is 'lost to sight,' without being particularly 'dear to memory.'

He was the type and model of one

generation of young Englishmen, as D'Orsay was of another. I see them before me as I recall the bright days of Almack's.

Lord Petersham, all admit, was a man of taste, cultivation, and high breeding. He delighted society by the perfect refinement which suffered no individual, even the most insignificant, to remember, when in his society, that he was himself anything more than simply a gentleman. Count D'Orsay was the joyous and loquacious well-bred Frenchman; and, as the pale, aristocratic visage of Lord Petersham began to assume the peculiar attributes of middle age, the florid, somewhat round, not unmanly, yet not essentially masculine face of D'Orsay was beheld, transiently, at Almack's. I say transiently, for associations were ultimately formed which drew D'Orsay into another clique; and ultimately, his fine talents, his endless *bonhomie*, his careless, generous nature, his ingenuity, and lastly, not least, his almost matchless personal attractions, were confined to one sphere in which he was loved, and ruined. Those who knew him attest that, without much deep feeling, without an atom of principle, or without even depth of reflection, or earnestness of character in any one point, he was immensely dear to all his intimates, simply from manner—not the artificial manner of Lord Petersham, but the apparently buoyant, rapid ways of a Frenchman, who, one might suppose, was as great a stranger to sorrow and difficulty as to sentiment. And, indeed, just to finish off and to dismiss this remarkable person, on whose career we offer no comment; he was, it appears, gay, invariably good-tempered, beloved by the few friends spared to him, to his last hours. Even when at Dieppe, in poor lodgings,—in privation, not to say want; deserted by his Imperial friend, so long an inmate at Gore House, bereft of her, who was his destiny—the spirits which had formerly blazed out at Almack's were never extinct until death had hushed his voice for ever. Sinking under a mortal disease, he was still elastic

and hopeful, and apparently light-hearted; and so, smiling at death, he passed away.

These two men were the stars of those nights. They were constellations of more beauty, and more real and intrinsic interest in those rooms at Willis's. And let us take a view of them through the mist of years. Presume we to glance at the planets of the sphere—the stately patronesses. They were then in their prime. Lady T——y, inscrutably at the head of fashion; the Marchioness of A——y, fair, like the belles of Charles the Second's Court, but fitted in virtue and propriety to belong to that of Queen Victoria; and Lady P——n. These were among the most notable of the ticket-giving female deities, and these still preside over the highest cliques of fashionable life.

Then the journals of the day still raved about the fair 'Cavendishes,' the daughters of Lord W—R—. They bloomed, and faded into middle age. A lovelier *groupe* succeeded; one after one came forth the rare beauties of that Villiers' line, renowned for personal gifts. First, she, perhaps the rarest of these rare sisters, transplanted, at an early, a too early age, to the cold climes of Austria. Heralds, in that country of etiquette, wrangled over her descent: in the list of her ancestry appeared a banker's name; the family hesitated—scrupled—even almost refused; and the worthy defunct founder of the fortune of this noble English house was pointed at as a stumbling-block, though then dead as Julius Cæsar. The obstacle was removed, and the sweet sacrifice was exhibited in a foreign Court. She bloomed there, was victorious, respected, and yet, a *grande dame*. Was she happy there? Happy in that gay, vicious capital, bearing one of its proudest names? Happy in her family summer residence, that castle, grand, but half furnished, full of state, but destitute of comfort—happy with her next to Imperial state; her guard of honour, and her place, almost nearest to royalty at Court? We know not: this we do know, she came home to die.

'She, my white rose, dropping off
 The high rose-tree branch! and not
 That the night wind blew too rough,
 Or the noon sun burnt too hot,
 But, that being a rose,—'twas enough!'

Unconscious of her fixed and fatal malady, she passed to a sphere congenial to her gentle and pure nature. The fair flower of Almack's was gathered ere it had quite faded.

Next came a sister, of a still more elevated beauty. Certainly, if anything of human mould is ever perfect, this specimen was perfect. Even though on her brow the seal of early doom was set when last we beheld her, with the wreath of violets round her head, the touch here and there of the last traces of mourning for a brother, who preceded her by some years to the tomb—even then, here was a matchless being. The true oval of the English face, long, somewhat—the delicately aquiline nose, the soft deep eyes, with those dark, sweeping lashes—the mouth of such excellent a turn, that, even in repose, it seemed to smile involuntarily; these were the points which first struck the fancy as you gazed on her whose name has become a proverb in our land, for loveliness. Then the long—not flaxen, yet not chestnut hair, that in glossy ringlets shaded the ivory throat, and touched the faultless shoulder; how graceful, how *English* it was! How few styles of hair-dressing can, if we allow for the different ideas of fashion, approach it now!

Somehow, a secret sorrow seemed settled on that lofty, marble brow; a pensive rather than a sad frame of mind, to be stamped on that never-to-be-forgotten face. Her history—but we will not meddle with it—Sacred be the mystery which was blended with her existence! Almost imperceptibly, she, too, faded away; and the common belief that never was there a face so fair, a form so matchless; and the engravings, which are still popular in our print-shops, are all that the public hold as memorials of their sometime idol.

But let us not hang a cypress wreath over our ball door. Call up

* E. Barrett Browning's last poems.

rather the gaieties and frivolities of the past. It is twelve o'clock; the opera is nearly over—my *débutantes* are promised for a quadrille, for a waltz, for a galop.

We hasten to the scene of action. We are late—one of the last galops danced, or rather flown, by the then Lady E——h, with the Prince S——, is just over. The patronesses are looking grave; the prince still graver: that thralldom had begun which he so soon threw off, when the scandal, and the flight, and the excitement were over. He is no more: *she* lives—and were it not that all her history is a matter of notoriety, and has been, over and over again, told us in foreign and English newspapers, I should not even glance at it.

It is well known how soon the graceful, able, but ever sombre Prince S—— separated from her whom he carried off from the gayest sphere in London; and how she was received at a certain German Court, not then celebrated for its discretion or its purity. Here, a foreign title covered, but did not obliterate, the name Lady E——h had dishonoured. Here a young nobleman of that far-off land fell in love with her, and made her honourable proposals. 'Do not,' she answered, 'ask me to marry you; I have no vocation for marriage.' Yet he persevered. 'You know all,' she urged; 'dare you tempt your destiny?' He followed her to Italy. He was still resolved. 'I shall make you wretched,' she urged; yet she yielded; they were married; and any one might have loved the handsome, enamoured Baron Ph——n. She bore him a daughter. Yet a certain Greek diplomat carried off that shallow semblance of a heart that was left to Lady E——h. Before, however, her *last* fall, she ventured to pay a visit to the wife of the nobleman, then minister at the Court of B——. She was announced as *La Baronne* Ph——n. With infinite tact the Lady Ambassador received her; spoke to her in French; talked of public places, and picture-galleries; ignored her former name, and suppressed all allusions to her being English. It was as the Baronne

Ph——n that she was admitted, and not as Lady E——h; and then the acquaintance ceased.

Lady E——h eloped with the Greek. The Baron Ph——n pursued the pair; fought with the young miscreant and almost killed him; then with a noble compassion—for it was in one of the wildest regions of Southern Germany that this occurred—took his foe into his own castle, the only house near, and had his wounds attended to. The Greek recovered, but at the end of six weeks disappeared. He had eloped, a second time, with Lady E——h.

Those who wished to see the heroine of this fearful tale, might have traced, in features still handsome, the once bright ornament of Almack's, at, we are sorry to say, the late capital and Court of Otho, King of Greece. Retribution followed, in a terrible, terrible form. Let us not pursue them. Return we to Almack's. See, the company are entering the refreshment-room; and the musicians are resting.

Do not expect, young *débutantes*, to see a splendid supper set out. The highest society in London affords an example of the greatest simplicity: tea and bread and butter are placed in profusion upon the long tables—nothing more. Wisely have the patronesses copied their programme from that of foreign *réunions*, where one danced all night upon *morues glacées* and *oranges glacées* before the introduction of tea, and where now tea, ice perhaps, *eau sucrée*, and lemonade are still the only refreshments. And, in our country of late dinners, who wants more than tea and bread and butter? Certainly not at Almack's, where every one went late; and thus a well-selected, well-conducted, and innocent recreation was insured at a moderate cost. To non-subscribers the tickets were half a guinea each.

Nothing was ever more acceptable nor more enjoyable than that tea. There, smiling, full of happiness, lovely, yet not of an elevated style of beauty, were the young Lady Emily, and, afterwards, Lady Fanny C——, and their mother, still looking like their elder sister. Good as they

were attractive, gentle, gracious, beloved, admired, they have been spared to show that high spirits and high fashion do not necessarily imply frivolity, nor produce a forgetfulness of the actual duties of life.

Near that doorway stands the beautiful Miss B——gs. The one slight, somewhat tall, with an oval face of rare symmetry, a faultless figure; the other shorter, plumper, her sweet face of a more roseate hue—a very Hebe, in that wreath of white roses round her auburn hair. Beauty, not rank, has raised these northern belles to their pre-eminence in the world of fashion, and that sort of beauty which is gentle, pure, modest, and fresh; for the *fast* young lady was a monstrosity unknown at the era of which we write in Almack's. Ours was not then, as it has since nearly become, the country of the Amazons. Hunting damsels were known only in books; we had few Di Vernons; those we heard of were considered as remarkable specimens, not as the accepted members of a class. Scandal there was, and scandal there ever will be; but in Almack's you must *look* for the source—it did not obtrude itself; and the audacious *exposé* of Lady E——h must not be taken as an indication of the general demeanour of the assembly.

Yet dark shadows passed across the brilliant scene. There walks a peer, in wit and accomplishments equal to the far-famed Comte St. Germain in the time of Louis XV., in manner irresistible; yet is he not endowed with eminent personal attractions. The wax lights display his red hair and whiskers as he vanishes into the card-room. Even there an inquest is sitting upon his honour—the honour of an ancient, brave, and hitherto unstained ancestry. The inquisition turns on the minutest facts; every one knows the truth, yet every one dreads and deprecates the exposure. That is his last night *there*—at Almack's. In a week all is over—he shrinks from public gaze—he retires to a home where, haunted by the past, his days are soon ended—a mind, intended for better things, is wrecked, and for ever!

And the gamester dies in obscurity, and utter alienation from all whom he had once loved! The time was when the pennon of his ancestors had been known in the battle-field, their motto in the tourney, their *panache* in the barriers. And now—but let us close the hateful topic, rejoicing that the fearless exposure, and the avoidance that ensued, have for ever annihilated the dishonour. The mischief and the misery of that celebrated delinquency has occurred no more amongst us.

In yonder corner of the tea-room, in shadow, stands a short, dark-complexioned man, whose eyes are scarcely ever raised from the ground to rest upon even the fairest faces; yet is he one who, in that drear yet impassioned youth of disappointment and difficulty, ardently admires beauty. No one would suspect it. It is true the hair on that straight brow is still brown, and thick, and glossy; and he, who has passed through a lifetime of adventures, is then scarcely thirty; yet youth was hardly even then one of his attributes. His small, narrow, grey eyes have none of its vivacity; his cheek, embrowned, not pale, none of its freshness. He stoops somewhat, and a heavy look of care depresses his physiognomy.

Yet is it care? or is it policy that wears such an aspect of apathy, and that indicates to the superficial observer such an absence of intelligence? Believe me, in that man—the brightest intellect of his time on a throne—the vast powers of his great intelligence are veiled by a coverture of indifference. He is playing a part. No one suspects the hidden fire, that scarcely ever fumes in the presence of observers. By that man of silence and reserve great designs are cherished, great wrongs are remembered—hopes never abandoned are smothered—and for these is the mask worn. Beneath it is a moral volcano. I watched him dancing. He who leads out in that *salle des maréchaux* the fair Spanish girl—that night when, by placing on her hand a white flower, he announced to her his imperial destiny—dances advisedly. On horseback

he shines more than he did of yore in the ball-room of Almack's. The hero, or victim—as you will—of that terrible duodecimo, 'Les Châtiments,' turns, and waltzes with precision—steadily, but not gracefully—and still the face is lowered; the eyes are never raised to those of his partner; he dances as a man who has been taught, but to whom dancing does not come naturally. I have seen him dance since. Now, the step is more measured still—performed almost with difficulty; yet it was never like the step of a young dancer, even when the dancer was in his prime.

'It is the Prince Louis Napoleon,' I observed to a friend by my side. 'I saw him the other day at Lord Eglintoun's practising—caricolling on a matchless courser, performing feats of horsemanship, at which some——'

'Laughed,' interrupted my neighbour. 'He made himself ridiculous. He is quite *de mauvais ton*. No one ever notices Louis Napoleon.'

'No one knows him,' I rejoined. 'No one comprehends the enigma of his character. Some say he is the shrewdest man alive, others hold a different opinion.'

'That he is one of the stupidest; and, depend upon it, the common opinion is usually just. He is a man of no talent—or he would not be here.'

My friend turned away, and, forgetting two beings so insignificant as myself and—Louis Napoleon, prepared to mingle in a cloud of dowagers. He turned back. 'His cousin,' he whispered, 'I grant you, is a better specimen—a handsome, accessible fellow,' and he pointed to a good-looking youth with all the Buonaparte attributes strongly on his face. 'He, I allow, may be *somebody*.' Thus spoke he of 'Plon Plon.'

Such was the received opinion. The intellect thus misjudged was a mine of wealth, which he, who built upon his treasure-hopes of future ascendancy, carefully hid—leaving it for one who had a secondary part to play in life to achieve popularity. What a whirlwind has not the existence of that stolid, and then gloomy-looking young man been

since those days at Almack's! Boulogne, and the tragedy of Bedingnet; that dark phantom of the imperial conscience—Strasburg; Ham, where the caged eagle sharpened his vision, and strengthened his talons, and prepared his wings, by a long apprenticeship to study—and, more serene, but not less monotonous, the retreat of Arensburg, where the once beautiful Hortense, the ex-queen of Holland, was often so reduced in circumstances that she and her maids of honour were obliged sometimes to dine on an omelet:—these scenes succeeded the brief period of halcyon days in Hyde Park, at Ascot, and at Almack's. What a preparation for glory is early adversity! Out of neglect, avoidance, even insult, rose the vast energies of him who now, as we recall Almack's to memory, figures before us. We see him, in recollection, silently, without any smile, bow, and set down his partner after the last waltz.

When at Arensburg, the great emperor, then an abjured refugee, called on a neighbour—that is, a neighbour on the opposite side of Lake Custance, but still the nearest neighbour of the Duchesse de Saint Leu and her sire. It was a grand old German castle, flanked and fortified without by strong walls and bastions—still more flanked and fortified within by pedigrees, etiquettes, and all the proprieties.

Our prince, galloping up to the gateway, sends in his card. It is given by the Suabian *chasseur à mon Baron* in his library. The stately old gentleman starts up in fury:—'How dares he call on me?' he exclaims—'you upstart incendiary! Take his card back.' A young English lady sitting near—for she was on a visit to this baron with his sixteen quarterings and pure blood—intercepts the card. 'As a curiosity,' smiling, she says, 'let me have it;' and as a curiosity she retains it. It is something to have the card given by a hand destined to empire, and returned by an old German recluse, living no one beyond his own drear world knows where, and gone, probably, long since this event, to his fathers with their sixteen quarterings.

Sometimes real, actual royalty, under a *nom de guerre*, has shown itself in the magic circle of Almack's. Witness the incognito visit to England, in the first year of our Victoria's reign, made by the King of Bavaria—Maximilian. Our matter-of-fact nation will never comprehend that the clever, eccentric King Ludwig is no longer on the throne. At the mention of the King of Bavaria, a vision of Lola Montes rises up, and a mist of improprieties obscures the mental vision of British listeners, who smile expressively.

Bless me! what a hurry of spirits agitates those diamond-crowned lady patronesses, when they hear that the thin, dark young man, with black straight hair, a regular and somewhat wooden contour of face, with a star only on his well-padded chest, is the King of Bavaria *de facto*, though to the assembly only Count Werdenfels! Ladies, be not alarmed; your characters are not endangered. 'Manx,' as the Germans call him, is a young bachelor on his preferment. The shorter, dark-haired, gentlemanly man at his side is the Vicomte de Vaublanc, the nephew of the minister of Charles X., and the friend and gentleman of the bedchamber of King Max.

And a more accomplished couple than the young prince and his companion have rarely visited Almack's. Guizot has pronounced the present King of Bavaria to be one of the most erudite monarchs in Europe (perhaps that is not saying much). Mons. De Vaublanc is an antiquary, an author, an artist—a man gay and witty, but reflective and laborious.

Quietly these strangers circulate through the room. But it is whispered that the King has had a private interview with our young Queen—not with matrimonial views,—for that difference of faith renders impossible—but for compliment and curiosity. The interview was constrained, for both spoke French, and both, it is said, would have been more at home either in German or even in English. And the prince was then on his way to Prussia, whose laws did not forbid his marrying one of the daughters of that Protestant house—a sweet

and lovely young princess, the ornament, if not the happiness of his now royal home.

Ah! those were halcyon days both to the King of Bavaria and to her who now mourns a life-long loss and sorrow. Young, a great admirer of beauty, with a stiff manner, but a romantic fancy, Max, it is known, cherished a sort of enthusiastic admiration for the girlish ruler of Great Britain. He always speaks of his interview, as of his visit to London, with great delight. Prosperous as a monarch, ill health has since marred his felicity; hers, alas! has had its days of blossom; and now, even ere she has scarce attained middle age, the sere and yellow leaves have fallen around her path. Where can she avoid them? They strew the garden walks of Osborne; they gather in the slopes of Windsor; they fly before the blasts of the northern gales of Balmoral. Where, indeed, can we leave sorrow behind us?

'This glassy wave, that spreading pine,
Those alders quivering to the breeze,
Might soothe a soul less sad than mine,
And please, if anything could please.'

But a truce to murmuring. As I stand near the doorway of the ball-room, and see the last steps of a quadrille danced out, and the final bow and curtesy performed, and then in a minute the music stops, and the musicians begin hurriedly to quit their places, and to put away their instruments, my memory—a long memory—reverts to dancing, as I knew it in my youth, as I see it in my maturity, and, to come to the present time, as I behold it in my old age.

I recall it in rooms far away from the so-called Willis's; country assemblies—compared to the exclusiveness of which Almack's was a perfectly open society; beneath old smoke-covered chandeliers; on floors bad enough to make your feet, as well as your heart, ache; in rooms, one end of which, constructed with folding doors, is opened on this gala night, but closed by day to make two apartments, the one for county magistrates and clergymen to dine in, the other for farmers to feed and smoke in; one end is, in truth,

redolent of the weed, the other, if not pure, purer. And here sit the lord-lieutenant of the county, and his lady, maybe; or the M.P. for the borough, smiling and gracious, and dancing with everybody; or the ancient commoner, whose family seat, built, like himself, clumsily, and not, we hope, for posterity, just arises above yon wood, which, if you look out of the festive scene, into the moonlight, you may see—presently.

Quadrilles had struggled into existence ere Almack's became Almack's; they were, at first, regarded as a heresy. A great deal of romping and happiness, a great deal of flirtation went on with country dances. What a list of pleasures used to be laid out for each evening!—hands across and four-round, pousette and allemand, down the middle and back again; then came the complicated figure of Monymusk, and of the college hornpipe—wherefore so called one cannot divine, for no people surely are so little likely to dance a hornpipe as the fellows of a college. Then there was the Boulanger, a dance including numbers, with a great deal of turning, and twisting, and holding up arms, and a sort of threading the needle that produced much laughter—whence derived I know not, except it may chance to be from *La Boulangère*, a rondo danced in the north of France, and sung also to words more piquant than proper. Lastly came Sir Roger de Coverley, the only good thing among this list of delights which we attempt to retain.

Quadrilles came — Paine's first set, I remember they were called. It was ages before country gentlemen could learn them; and when they did, who was the foolhardy man who dared to show his steps in that fearful *pas seul* in '*La Pastorale*.' Shade of Oscar Byrne! I have known some of my pupils immolate their reputation in that fatal stake. But the lists are closed now to good dancers. The necessity for male prowess exists no longer. To walk the figure in time, to shake one's foot in time, to carry oneself well, and to look as if one felt one was

somebody, are all the requisites of a cavalier in these enlightened days. Steps and pirouettes, balancées and assemblées, rigadoons and chassés, —these have gone out with many abuses—with duels and damages for crim. con., with silk stockings and pumps, embroidered waistcoats and shorts, and I know not what other absurdities.

By degrees the quadrille became a stereotyped process. Paine's quadrilles consisted at first of five distinct figures: there was *La Poule* and *La Trenise*, *La Pastorale* and *L'Été*, and a grand conclusion—all vanished now into thin air. It was necessary, when the balls at Almack's began, to go through the whole set, and learn a code of steps consistent with each. And there was a long preparatory training, with great loss of temper, and loss of fiddle-strings on the part of the teachers—when, lo! a revolution in men and manners! the waltz was introduced. Modestly, at first, did young men and maidens, who had scarcely so much as shaken hands, come into contact tender enough for affianced lovers. Deeply did virtuous matrons blush, whilst worthy fathers looked in from the card-room with horror on their roseate faces; but being assured that all was right, and that my Lady Sophy Lindamell had waltzed away, first of all with Captain Cutbush, went back again with an air of resignation to their long whist. It is very long since matrons have ceased to blush when they see their young daughters carried off in the whirl of some human teetotum. They blush only, and with resentment too, when their blooming daughters are suffered to sit still.

The waltz, fixed by fate, as it would seem to be, has had its variations. When first introduced, it was *à trois temps*, danced with a slow, sinking step; the left hand of the lady was rested on the upper part of her partner's right arm; it is now

placed on his shoulder. The other two hands, conjoined, were held out and aloft, looking like a handle, and the further extended the better; they are now lowered, and the step is *à deux temps*—rapid as human will can make it. Then the shocking, vulgar, jerking polka was an introduction which seemed to herald in the downfall of Almack's.

Such was the dancing: now for the dressing. Does any one remember the giraffe bows of the hair worn simultaneously with short waists, in the olden times of Almack's? Does any one remember the very low, indelicate boddices and scanty dresses of our respected mothers in those days?

Let him then rejoice in the simple, natural way in which hair is now worn among our fair; let him approve the more modest costume, the full and flowing skirts, the comparative absence of art, and the prevalence of that decorum which covers such a multitude of sins in our continental neighbours.

Next let him wish, for the sake of society, not that Almack's, as it was, should be restored—for the component parts are lost, the members died out, the secret of combination is lost—but that every association for the public gratification should exhibit the propriety of Almack's, with a little of its exclusiveness. We were too exclusive once; we are now too lax: I say rather, since people must have amusement, that each class should have its Almack's; each class maintain its own position and reputation; each class admit its own worthy members, without striving either to enter into that of others, or descending to soil its purity by the admission of damaged nobility, or to lower its standard by the false good-nature which should allow inferiority of position, in so far as it implies inferiority of mind or manners, to enter its sphere.

CRICKETANA.

No. VIII.

OXFORD v. CAMBRIDGE.—GENTLEMEN PLAYERS, WHEREIN DEFICIENT

WHY can't the Gentlemen beat the Players?

We should like to modify this question and put it thus:

Why are the Gentlemen so frequently beaten, not having won the match since 'Mr. Kempson's year,' just ten years since? Why is it so apparent to every one who looked on at the match just lost, that the same side would, on the same ground, have won nineteen matches out of twenty?

In stating this opinion we speak on a supposition of the habits, hallucinations, and inexperience of the Gentlemen remaining (which they would not be) exactly the same.

The old solutions of the mystery, though very sensible, are not quite enough. We hear that the Players can muster more nearly their best Eleven than the Gentlemen can; though we hear nothing of the fact that the Gentlemen may select from thousands while the Players comparatively are as tens. We hear, also, that 'it is the bowling that does it,' with too little allowance for the fact that the Gentlemen are generally used to the Players' bowling while the Players are new to the bowling of the Gentlemen.

Now we freely admit that the bowling has much to do with the constant defeat; but we must deny that it accounts for the wide difference so glaring as the score papers, not only of the last match, but of the matches played regularly since 1835, (1838 and 1839 excepted) and three times with odds; as with two bowlers given, or 'barn-door,' wickets to bowl at as in 1837, or 'players under thirty,' as last year.

The very wide difference in the scores we account for in the manner following:—

1. That Lord's ground, while very trying to all players, even the oldest if not accustomed to it, is doubly trying to all young players.

On this point we invite all old

players to revive their youthful recollections, and to say whether our own experience has not also been theirs too. Surely we all must remember that when very confident of scoring on our own ground, we have been sadly disappointed when playing elsewhere—perhaps when taken away from home in the plenitude of our self-satisfaction to astonish the natives and to make a cruel example of some inferior country club.

On the Oxford ground I remember we had good clear light, but when once opposed to Mr. Budd at Purton, I saw three or four shades of a dark belt of trees on every slow ball he delivered: and the ball came provokingly dropping in high curves, just as if to mock my unhappy eyesight. But strange fancies as to ground, and even an objection to wickets pitched diagonally, is not peculiar to 'colts:' for I remember when, in 1838, I came to Lord's to play the 'Left-handed men of England v. the M.C.C.:' and Mr. Aislaby had pitched the wickets up and down, instead of, as usual, across the slope, even the oldest players began to grumble at being put out of their usual way, and the wickets were changed!

Our friends will readily recollect, from these instances, the extreme sensitiveness of young cricketers on any little local peculiarities to which practised players are indifferent. The value of a Cricketer in an Eleven is commonly estimated by his play alone; but much depends on a certain amount of experience; for experience alone will give him an intuitive perception of the quality of the ground, and the power of adapting his play to every variety of circumstance.

If this is true anywhere, nowhere is this experience and this versatility required as much as at Lord's; for not only do young men play more ambitiously, as affected by the cog-

nocturnal in the Pavilion and the presence and cheers of thousands, than Players do, but the ground is very peculiar as to the timing—it varies even from day to day; a rainy night having many a time made the game all against the one party and all in favour of the other. But at all times the batsman must expect a greatly increased bias from the slope, and even a greater bias at the higher than at the lower wicket. The unevenness of the ground also renders indispensable—what is very rare with that brilliant hitting which is naturally learnt, because it may answer well, on true ground—I mean the habit of watching the ball right up to the bat, and not playing to the pitch only. To hold the bat for the ball to hit it is quite fatal at Lord's, though not very wise play anywhere.

But next I must be so bold as to maintain that the Gentlemen are beaten in the batting also. They play rather a showy than a winning game; and here again Lord's ground renders the steady game of the Players more winning and the fast game of the Gentlemen more losing than would elsewhere be the case. 'If the ball takes to shooting,' said an old player before the game began, 'I know three or four of the best of the Gentlemen who will not stop it: they may stop an odd one or two, but they are no good against what I call shooting bowling.' This was said by a man who appears to us always to follow the rule which we claim to have been the first to publish: *he eyes every ball as if it would prove a shooter*, whereas others are all for the rise, and think it 'hard lines' if it shoots.

The truth of this player's remark was very evident from the style of the play of——, but we will avoid names, especially as the play of the same gentlemen was, in many respects, a treat to see. But Mr. C. D. Walker and the Hon. De Grey looked more the sort of play for Lord's; they looked as if defence was first and hitting was second. Mr. V. Walker's innings was also delightful to see on the second day, as was also Mr. Wright's, and on the first day Mr. Bentham's; all these players

'looked like business:' but there is a certain sanguine style which we recognize at a glance as not 'the winning game.' No. A severe system of defence and rigidly straight play—expecting every ball to be straight, and every straight ball to prove a shooter, is the play for Lord's. With any other style a man may have a brilliant innings sometimes, but he is the wrong man to oppose to Jackson, Willsher, and Tarrant on Lord's ground. On the Oval, each of these players being very plain bowlers, and fast bowling being easy enough on very true ground, an amateur has an easier game. Three days after the match at Lord's, Mr. Mitchell scored (with only one mistake) seventy-five runs against three of the best bowlers of the day, Hodgson, Atkinson, and Willsher.

The fame of Mr. Grace rendered all the field anxious to see him: but the opinion of good judges before the game commenced, was, that Lord's was the very worst ground for him: and we suspect that if he played regularly at Lord's he would modify his present style of play, for he depends too much on the eye, and that is a game which was never yet known to answer long. Griffiths has this year added a straight bat to his well-known power of hitting. We strongly recommend Mr. Grace to do the same. We believe as fully as any one that there is an unusual power of cricket in Mr. Grace. But however keen the eye, and however great the natural quickness, cross play will not answer, but the breadth and length of wood that moves between the bowler and the wicket will tell at last. A distinguished member of the Surrey Club suggests that, as a means of shortening the innings, a quarter of an inch off the width of the bat would make a very great difference. But what is a quarter of an inch to the loss of wood resulting from a slanting bat?

One disadvantage of the Gentlemen is that they feel a faster game is expected of them. They have learnt a variety of hits, and they are impatient to bring them into requisition. There is more inven-

tion in their play, and while it lasts it is infinitely better worth seeing; but when every old cricketer feels certain that the more freely they are hitting, the more liable to be betrayed into some wild play, and the less prepared they are becoming for a fast shooter, the admiration of the spectator is apt to be damped by his regard for the score.

Again, there are two kinds of play which we must endeavour to explain. Excuse our philosophizing when we say the law of habit reigns supreme in cricket. Take Grundy, Parr, and Carpenter. I would almost stake my fortune on the fact that any one of these three men will play the same ball in the same way from the beginning of the season to the end. They have formed so rigid and inflexible a habit that they seem almost like automats in this, that they do not seem to have the least notion—to say nothing of any temptation—of making positively wild or foolish hits. Experience has placed certain dangerous modes of play altogether aside. They have seen and suffered for certain things so often that they are never to be thought of more.

This *habitual* play characterizes the Players' game—partly because they are more experienced and have been punished out of many wild practices, but more especially because they are less inventive or experimental than men of education. The Hon. C. G. Lyttelton is undoubtedly a fine player, but for playing under the difficulties of Lord's we should like a little more of the Grundy look about the generality—as if their energies were concentrated on defence and the hitting were second in their minds. In the second innings no less than four of the Gentlemen lost their wickets, if not by making up their minds to swipe before the ball came, at least by a kind of play equally wild and equally beyond their better judgment—and why? Because their style of play is not *habitual*—it is not set or fixed as the natural and inflexible principle of their cricketing existence. Resolution to play steadily is not enough—habit is the stronger principle. What a man is used to do

that he will do. Our Oxford friends may illustrate their ethics from the cricket field, and may discover they have a 'law in the members' too strong for the 'law in the mind'—in plain English, You never can depend on eleven amateur batsmen not to have four or five at least among the number who will be suddenly betrayed into some wild trick which no professional would ever dream of.

This want of confirmed habits of play marks the difference between young players and old. There are a certain number of ways of being out—*ten* at the least—dangers which Pilch would avoid even if he played at sixty years of age. And these ten foolish tricks make such a set-off against play in other respects the most brilliant, that I am never surprised to see the dull, monotonous batting of an average professional produce a better average than one of the most dashing of the amateurs.

Add to all these causes of inferiority that 'the Gentlemen' have nerves but the Players have none. Their powers vary more from day to day; they are more subject to atmospheric influences—to wit, the atmosphere of opera boxes and hot rooms, and not the better for cooling down by ice and refrigerators various. I am afraid of appearing to reflect upon their pluck, though in reality it is a point rather of sensitiveness, or I would say that the Gentlemen's Eleven is more subject to a panic and more easily demoralized when the game goes one way.

Influenced by these considerations, I was so bold as to say to a friend that the Gentlemen were not beaten by the bowling only—nay, I would put Jackson and Tarrant on the Gentlemen's side, and back the Players after all. This opinion being received with amazement, I argued that the Eleven Players of England would, against Jackson and Tarrant, be worth 140 to 150 runs on Lord's, with wickets as they are now prepared, whereas the Gentlemen were not worth above 100.

A man whom many call the best player in England stood by and observed, 'Sir, I would back the

Players, because our batting is much better. The plain truth is the Gentlemen do not "play the game." (He meant 'they cannot be depended on to play the game.') 'I can play as fast a game as any one of them if I please; but I dare not do it. And if they played, as we do, on every variety of ground and against continually strange bowling, they would soon find it out.'

He meant to say that guess hitting—hitting out for the long field before there is time to see the rise of the ball, and putting hitting first instead of defence first—that this would never answer. The Player walks up to his wicket to make what is on the ball: but the very appearance of the Gentleman shows that he is impatient of every ball that is not fit for hitting.

I am quite sure that in the days when the Hons. Ponsonby and Grimston formed the Gentlemen's Eleven you did not see the same wild play you see at present. They 'played the game,' and much of the present hitting was then not practised, not because they could not do it, but because it had been tried and not found to answer. The bowling of Lillywhite, Cobbett, Redgate, and Hillyer had that accuracy of pitch and that erratic spin about it that everything but a severe style of defence was proved a loss in a very short time.

The Universities' match had more than one point of interest, to me especially, as I had the honour of playing the first Universities' match that ever was played at Lord's, though the Cantabs, with Mr. Herbert Jenner, played once at Oxford in 1829. In 1836 among my opponents I could reckon the well-known names of Charles Taylor, Frederic Ponsonby, and Broughton—and we should have had Kirwan, but the King's men could not play. And where, after twenty-seven years, are my old compeers? Rawlinson is deep in Egyptian and other historic researches; Ryle is sowing broadcast tracts and good seed of other kinds; C. Duke Yonge supplies ammunition for the shooting-grounds of Etonian and many other 'young ideas,' and older minds too—

for we had seven classmen or prizemen in our Eleven, and four at least have passed away. Goring is lost to Sussex; Vance was killed by a fall, as both his father and his brother had been before him; Sibthorpe, and, but one month since, Charles, the last surviving son of Lord Frederic Beauclerk, are numbered with the dead.

In the two Elevens we recognized by their names a son of Lord Lyttelton in the Cambridge Eleven of 1838; Wright, son of F. B. Wright, of the famous Wykehamist Eleven, and afterwards of the Oxford Eleven in the days of Knatchbull, Meyrick, Price, Pool, and others; and Garnier, son of one of the steadiest of our Eleven at the same date.

And what comparison do we draw of the play of these as compared with our own days? Though in some respect *laudator temporis acti se puero*, I must admit that round-arm bowling was in its infancy. The Cantabs gave us 33 by wides, and we gave them 14; and as to the batting, we had not above three in our Oxford Eleven who would have been worthy a place in the same side now. Of the Cambridge players I cannot speak so positively, but I think three is as many bats as they could have supplied to a side as good as played this year at Lord's. However, a year or two later made a great difference, Oxford having Mr. Lowth, who bowled successfully against the Players, and Mr. Charles Taylor having several in his Eleven nearly as good as himself. Still the play of this date must not be underrated, because the M. C. C., with Cobbett, Lillywhite, and Bailey, nearly at their best day found men at both Universities to score from 30 to 50 runs—a score far too many for anything but good play.

As to the Universities' contest on the 22nd of June, in the presence of some six thousand spectators, every one was speculating on the probable result of the match—a point in which there was scope for arguments on both sides. The Oxonians had been reputed the stronger: still, the achievements of the Hon. C. G. Lyttelton against the Surrey bowlers gave quite as

fair a promise as anything the Oxonians had done against the Marylebone; and as the Cambridge had first innings they were rather the favourites with the betting men. Neither had the game commenced above ten minutes before things looked very fair for Cambridge. The Hon. T. De Grey and Mr. Tuck were opposed by Messrs. Teape and R. C. Walker; and so well did they play the bowling, which was very good, that 17 were scored without loss of a wicket; and well knowing that in cricket the 'first blow is half the battle,' we were almost afraid the bowling might be collared at the first throw off. But then there came an important change. The Hon. T. De Grey was caught cleverly at short-leg; his successor, Mr. Marshall, brilliantly caught by Mr. Haygarth, undoubtedly a first-rate wicket keeper; and soon such fractions as $\frac{2}{17}$, $\frac{3}{21}$, $\frac{5}{32}$ spoke of a different state of things.

And now Mr. Daniel, known as a fearful hitter, and the Hon. C. G. Lyttelton were partners, and the Oxonians, fearing a stand made by two such men, replaced Mr. Teape by Mr. Scott, a left-handed bowler much faster than Jackson: whom on rougher ground even Grundy seemed to play with his chin high in air. This change proved successful. Mr. Daniel's wicket and his successor's fell by two successive balls; and then Mr. Scott bowled wides enough to shame his side into taking him off: though to win the game I should have kept him on, for no one could do anything with his balls. Still neither in length or straightness was there anything to recommend it. On smooth ground it would be worth very little.

The Hon. C. G. Lyttelton ('not out, 19') played very like a player—steadily and judiciously, in a style that showed more cricket than all the swiping in the match. But his side was all down for only 65. This seemed very small; but the sodden and deceitful working of the ground, old players remarked, might puzzle the other side also.

Messrs. Walker and Garnier, whom we deemed especially likely to feel at home at Lord's, began well

to the point of 17, when Mr. Garnier was beautifully caught at short slip; next came Mr. Wright—'Wright of Rossall School'—a name by which that gentleman was known after his score of 50, made quite like a player with the utmost ease and no mistake, in the North and South match last year. Wright was the man we would have backed, especially at Lord's, at choice against any one of either side; but 'the Fates forbade:' he was bowled at once by one of Mr. Plowden's slow balls: and now the wickets, like those of Cambridge, fell apace. Mr. Evans made a stand for 25 fortunately, though Mr. Plowden took a wicket with almost every ball that could have hit one—how, or why, we did not understand. The talk of the Pavilion was that 'he had established a funk,' with the usual disasters consequent on all demoralized and panic-stricken forces. But we think there was no little luck in the matter. For slow bowling working remarkably on that damp ground, as Mr. Plowden's did, it is rather dangerous to play back; still, very few players do we ever see playing 'slows' forward and getting at the pitch of them till they have waited an Over or two to get their eyes open; and, luckily for Mr. Plowden, before that desirable object had been arrived at, he had settled his man. The Oxonians came out in a minority of 7 runs.

Still, it was evident that the Oxford side had the better bowling, and we looked confidently to the result of the second innings.

* Neither were we disappointed. Mr. Voules and Mr. Teape bowled remarkably well; and the ground helped the bowlers very much. With such bowling and wicket-keeping very little hitting could be expected. Lyttelton was bowled by a ball that broke down the hill beyond computation, and the whole innings was but 61.

The Oxonians had thus to make 69 only to win. Mr. Garnier, now deemed as valuable a bat as any on their side, was out for 3 runs, and the play ended for the first day.

The fielding on both sides had been first-rate. Mr. Marshall at

long-stop, Mr. Daniel at long-leg, and Mr. Wright at point, with Mr. Garnier—attracted especial admiration, though there was scarcely a second-rate fieldsman on either side. Indeed, accustomed as we have been to see the professionals field—much older men, and men wanting that zest and stimulus which never is more rife than in our University contests—we were struck with the difference of the activity of youth and maturer years.

About twenty is the age of the most elastic tissues. Mr. Marshall we saw make a catch at the Oval which Mortlock would never have hoped to reach; and Mr. Tuck at point caught Mr. Walker by running in to a ball which Carpenter could not have been down quick enough to save; and every long hit was saved for a three, when usual it were four. The byes or leg-byes, which, with the best play, average 4 to 100 runs, were only 2 to 126 lost by Oxford, and 6 to 127 by Cambridge—very good, considering Mr. Hope Grant bowls, like Mr. Scott, an extraordinary pace.

It was fortunate for Cambridge that Mr. Daniel caught Mr. Mitchell at long-leg for 2 runs. The fine innings he has made since at the Oval for 75 shows that he is in his best play. A singular thing occurred at the end of the second innings of the Cambridge side. Mr. Hope Grant was lame, and rather skipping than running between the wickets, when once the ball was handled by the wicket-keeper, and Mr. Grant three yards at least from home, yet, to the surprise of all, his wicket was not put down. 'How magnanimous, not to take advantage of a lame man!' said some; but the truth was, he owed his escape and ten runs to the score to the fact that the wicket-keeper thought no run was being attempted!

Tuesday was a beautifully bright—quite a cricket day, and an unusually large number of spectators came to see the 'tug of war.' Under no circumstances could any one reasonably expect to see nine such wickets lowered for 66 runs, but the state of the ground—now much more lively and true, was much less

favourable for Mr. Plowden's bowling.

The Cambridge began with Mr. Hope Grant—perhaps not a bad move. Steady play could hardly win, and very swift bowling is known to have its lucky days with two or three wickets to an Over; and though this happens but once in a season, we always have an impression that the game is on the dice. However, Mr. Grant's, unlike Mr. Scott's fast bowling, is of the plainest description, and was played confidently and well, both by Mr. Walker and Mr. Inge, and as to Mr. Plowden's bowling, after one or two Overs, it was quite evident he had met his match: he was regularly 'understood' and 'found out.' Every ball pitched near enough not to be played easily back, almost as a long hop, Mr. Inge boldly stepped in to meet quite at the pitch, and, without lifting it, drove it safely and forcibly to the corner of the ground: threes and fours followed in rapid succession. Mr. Walker was cleverly caught, as aforesaid, by Mr. Tuck at point; still the same game did Mr. Inge continue with Mr. Evans as his partner, till the scorers held up their broadsheets to say Enough—and out of the 68 runs 48 were made by Mr. Inge.

Thus ended the twenty-seventh match between Oxford and Cambridge. Each University had won thirteen previously, and now the Oxonians have one game in advance. If we reckon batting, bowling, and especially wicket-keeping (which is rarely very good), as well as fielding, we doubt if Oxford ever sent a better Eleven into the field. The batting of both sides, with few exceptions, is open to the remark, too widely applicable at the present day, that the play seems too much accommodated to that modern race of *cognoscenti* who come to Lord's to see—not batting, but hitting, and hitting of the 'astronomical' kind; for we observe that the higher it goes in the air the more vociferously do people applaud it. The truth is men bat—remember we do not say 'practise batting'—too much. They swipe away by the hour, fallaciously supposing that they have only to

practise hitting, and that stopping or systematic play (since they know how it should be done in a strict match) they can command at any time. Never was there a greater mistake; *as you do in practice so will you do in a game*—habit is a much stronger principle than resolution, quite as much so in cricket as in matters of more serious consequence. The writer of these papers has always maintained that valuable habits

are formed in our cricket fields as in our schools, and many are disciplined in the one who learn little in the other. He therefore insists on 'playing with the head.' But these and similar opinions he has endeavoured to illustrate in an o'er-true tale of school, college, and London life.*

* 'Dragon's Teeth.' By the Rev. James Pycroft. 2 vols. at Booth's, and all circulating libraries.

Fashionable Promenades :

RICHMOND HILL.

THE silence of the evening comes apace,
And twilight gathers in the shadows still :
At such an hour, so lovely is the place,
One could not choose but stroll on Richmond Hill.

The paradise of poets, who have sung
Its beauties—but, we ask, if poets' lays,
Or eloquence from any mortal tongue,
Could hope to say enough in Richmond's praise?

Go ask those ladies, who, with many a smile
And pretty glance are moving to and fro—
They stop, and on the landscape gaze a while,
And turning round they answer, smiling, 'No.'

Go ask the stately swell, who through his glass
Looks at the ladies that about him go ;
He will glance round him with admiring face,
And answer with enthusiastic 'No.'

And when men have an hour or two to spare,
Leaving the town behind them, they may fill
Their hearts with gladness, in a place so fair
And full of memories as Richmond Hill.

When it grows late, and people one by one
Depart, and all the air is still around,
When we are left with reverie alone
Or fairy fancy on the enchanted ground ;

More fair the place than ever! and there floats—
While not a leaf is ruffled by a breeze—
Radiance from star to star—those silver boats
That ride at anchor in the heavenly seas.

Then might one wish that, as earth's troubles fill
Our anxious hearts with care and lives with pain,
The sun that set behind yon distant hill
Might never rise to look on woe again.



Drawn by Walter Crona.

FASHIONABLE PROMENADES: RICHMOND HILL

[See the Post.

GOLF.

'Nam etiam excidentas,
Unius admonitione verbi in
Memoriam reponuntur.'—QUINT. *Inst.*

PLEASANT is the sound of golf to thousands of Scotchmen, and to not a few Englishmen, recalling many a friendly contest and many a cheerful walk in the breezy freshness of the open links—pleasant, though sad, the memories of golfing friends and companions scattered—or gone.

This purely national game has the special recommendation that it can be played and enjoyed at all ages and by all classes. Doubtless there is a wide difference in a contest between a couple of old gentlemen who walk at two miles an hour, and whose longest strokes are fifty or sixty yards, and the strong and skilful play of two fine golfers, who send their balls whizzing far and sure over bank and brae; but each party has equal interest and enjoyment, equal air, and exercise. The artisan and the schoolboy have their intervals of leisure for the healthful game, and can have their daily round, without expense, and without being bound to remain too long; while the active man of business may, from time to time, relax a little, have his golf, and be quite within call for any pressing duty.

These advantages, and the wide, expansive, healthful nature of the game, make it justly popular, far beyond such affairs as bowls, quoits, &c., which are cramped pastimes, well enough for a time, but not free, open exercise, and no more to be compared with golf than an amble in Rotten Row with a crashing gallop in Leicestershire.

Cricket is a noble game, but it requires constant practice to do any good—a score or so of players to make a game of interest—and a lengthened time to play. Moreover, one's day's comfort may be destroyed by a trifling slip or mischance; one gets put out, having had no play, and vexed and discontented *past remedy*. Nay; even under the most favourable circumstances four-fifths of the time is spent in looking on, or trotting after

balls—but golf is a perpetual innings. Mistakes or mishaps may be remedied by careful play—it affords agreeable change of place and variety of ground—time is one's own, and temper is rarely too sorely tried. Cricket! pooh, pooh, not a leg to stand on!

But, friend Sawney, saith the reader, are hunting, shooting, and fishing not equal to your glorified golf? Granted; but they demand travel, time, leisure, money, and there are such things as blank days. Golf has *no* blank days, and always beautifully suits itself to the resources of her Majesty's subjects in tendon, time, and tin.—Q. E. D.

Golf is of very great antiquity. Kings have delighted to send afar the flying ball and make the skilful put. Statesmen, soldiers, and men of science have all their representatives on the golfing green, and at this moment there are few men of mark in Scotland who are not members of a golf club.

The dashing fox-hunter enjoys this open game particularly; indeed, the late Sir D. Baird, who was noted both as a fox-hunter and a golfer, declared that, if obliged, he would rather forego his hunting.

The gallant Sir Hope Grant is a keen and famous golfer, and in the midst of arduous work abroad, longed for a good game, and, when lately home, enjoyed it to the full.

Any day, on St. Andrew's links, may be observed an old grey-haired gentleman riding (by special privilege) a pony, and dismounting to make his stroke. This is the brave General Sir J. Lowe.

Equal enjoyment has the man of science, business, or leisure in this fascinating game; and yet it is scarcely to be believed, yet true, that in this nineteenth century there are unfortunates who have never even heard of golf—and others, yet lower in the scale of intelligence, in whose benighted minds the game of games is associated with hinch-pin, nurr and

spell, and such plebeian mysteries. My readers are of another stamp; many know the game, and will read of it with pleasure. Others having of course seen, read, or heard of golf, must burn for information, and seek a yet clearer understanding of how it is done.

For this end I shall endeavour, shortly and plainly, without technicality, to explain the implements used in golf; and where, and in what manner, it is played—referring my reader, for minute detail and practical guidance, to a work on the subject, entitled ‘*Rambling Remarks on Golf*,’ * and published by Messrs. Chambers of Edinburgh.

The requisites for playing this game in completeness and comfort are—

- A set of clubs of various sizes;
- A knowing caddy (or club carrier);
- A few golf balls; and
- A good sort of fellow to play against.

A set of clubs of eight or ten may cost about 2*l.* or 3*l.*, and should last nearly a lifetime, with a trifling occasional outlay for a new club, or chance breakage.

These clubs are of different lengths, from thirty-six to forty-five inches, with shafts of seasoned hickory, ash, or lancewood, about the thickness of a man’s thumb at the handle, and tapering to the size of the little finger at the bottom, where the head is spliced on.

The club heads are of varied forms, to suit the stroke to the nature of the ground where the ball may happen to lie; they are carefully and neatly fashioned of thorn or other tough wood, and are loaded with lead and faced with horn.

Two or three of a set of clubs have heads of flattened iron for striking the ball out of difficult ground.

Each club in the set has a different name (‘play club,’ ‘spoon,’ ‘cleek,’ ‘putter,’ &c.), and is placed at once by the caddy into the player’s hands, when required.

Golf balls are about half the size

* So miscalled, as the rambling remarks are few and dry; yet it is a perfect manual of golf, curiously definite and correct.

of a billiard ball, and until a few years ago, they were made by cramping leather cases with feathers, and then cost 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* each. Now they are made of hammered gutta-percha, and painted white; they are hard as wood, and heavier; these gutta-percha balls fly quite as far as the old sort, and run truer on the ground, from being more spherical.

A fair stroke at golf may be said to be from a hundred and fifty to a hundred and seventy yards. Now and then a long driver may send a ball above two hundred yards if it should get a smooth run on alighting. In all strokes, both hands are used with the club, which is bound at the handle with leather strips, to make the grasp firmer.

Golf is played on wide open parks, meadows, or ‘links’ *—a match, or game, is usually between two persons, each playing his own ball. When foursome or double matches are played, still only two balls are used, and played alternately by the parties—the match being two against two. The holes are from a hundred and fifty yards to a quarter of a mile apart.

The game consists simply in this:

Each party strikes his ball in turn towards the hole, and he who reaches it and holes his ball in fewest strokes, gains the hole; and as the players walk on and play their own ball by alternate strokes, watching each other’s play, it makes the match sociable as well as interesting. The first hole is decided either by being divided, or what is called halved; or is won by one of the players having done it in fewer strokes than the other.

The winner of the majority of holes in the round, gains the match, and also counts the number of holes by which he has beaten his antagonist. Thus, if the round be eighteen holes, and one of the players has gained twelve of the round, he is said to win a match and six holes.

At the great golf meetings, only one day is allowed in playing for

* Links, the term given in Scotland to extensive grassy tracts by the sea-shore: those played on are miles in extent. A round of St. Andrew’s links is four and a half miles.

Drawn by C. A. Doyle.

GOLF.

[See the Sketch.



medals or prizes of honour, the laurels being decided, at this time, by doing the holes in rotation in fewest strokes, as individual contests, for a majority of holes, would be interminable.

Next day is resumed the more pleasant fashion of party contests and counting the holes: this makes matters go much more pleasantly than by a long reckoning. Each hole stands for itself, as that one is gained or lost, and with the exception of scoring one (in, say a round of twenty, to either party) the errors of the past are left behind—one hole lost being the direst result from any single act of bad play or turn of fortune, however disastrous at the moment. This elasticity is the beautiful feature of the game.

So, gentle reader, having both lucidly and curtly shown you the golfer's weapons and mode of warfare, let us now have a pleasant little journey and see a veritable campaign.

Fancy then, that, Asmodeus-like, I have carried you to St. Andrews, the Melton of golf, and the very Palmyra of ecclesiastical ruins.

Fancy that we have traversed the clean, airy streets of the Scottish Oxford, visited her grand and perfect library, and admired her noble colleges; that we have passed by hoary tower and through mouldering archway; moved thoughtfully by the tombs of burly soldier, gentle scholar, and scheming priest; flitted in monastic gloom through the gorgeous and gigantic cathedral remains of this antique little city; and that we now stand, in the blazing sunshine, on the battery fronting the German Ocean.

What a change! from the contemplation of hoary damp and ghoulish decay, to face the ever-living freshness of the glittering sea, stretching in unruffled beauty to the very verge of the horizon.

Is it not a vision of promise and peace? From far below come the sweet voices of children gathering shells, and out in the bay the sea-mews are floating listlessly on the smooth swell of the tide wave.

Now take a cigar and come along to the links. Not yet. You are

asking what are these great ivy-covered ruins on the promontory? The crumbling remains of the proud Cardinal Beaton's castle. Ay, changed, indeed, are these vaulted arches and sculptured battlements. Mark the vast space enclosed within the broken wall. Yes, I mean that now grassy platform, where girls are laughing and playing croquet—that platform, once the pavement of the castle, trod by haughty priest and predatory noble—fancy one of those rapacious falcons entering that merry dovecot! Eheu! for the croquet; but we must move, as we have not come to study past glories, but present golf.

At last we are at the right place—that neat building below the obelisk is the club-house. Come in and be introduced. Well, we shall suppose friendly greetings, &c., within the fine, cheerful, roomy parlour, whose windows look right upon the glorious expanse of that paradise of golfers, the Links of St. Andrews.

It is now half-past eleven in the forenoon; several parties have already started, with the proper intervals demanded by strict rule, for the safety and convenience of players. There are still a few players left, and these are donning their light jackets and hob-nailed shoes, or giving out their implements to their caddies: two or three old gentlemen, non-players, are quietly smoking their morning cigar, and discussing the news. Ah! here they come at last, the two I wish you to see play (Capt. F—— and Mr. M——); they are very well matched, and both first-rate golfers. While the Captain is giving out his clubs, and Mr. M—— scribbling a note, we shall go out to the starting-place, they will be on the links presently.

Before they come out, I may premise that there are few games where the probable results may be so nearly calculated on as golf. In cricket or billiards a slip or a fluke may be fatal. Not so in golf; what is called luck is, on the whole, an unimportant item—a bad *break*, perhaps, that means, the ball being diverted in its course from alighting on a stone or broken ground; but

this does not necessarily lose the hole, and is not often ruinous if it should: good luck, on the other hand, is nearly confined to a good break, or to a steal, that is, holing the ball at an unusual and unlikely distance; but even this is not all luck, for the ball must have been well and carefully played, although, perhaps, a trifle over-rewarded. Indeed, as a rule, with very few exceptions (and these neither frequent nor vital) good play leads to good results, while bad play infallibly leads to grief. No flukes in golf; and the Devil himself could not cheat.

Oh! the caddies have just placed the balls for the hit off, and the players, club in hand, are about making the start. You observe they are both handsome men, in prime vigour and activity. As you must see golf in perfection, we shall go the round along with them.

The balls being teed, Captain F—— hits off, driving his ball about one hundred and sixty yards towards the hole. Mr. M—— follows, and his ball lies a little to the right of that of the Captain. Let us go on.

On coming to the balls, Mr. M—— is farthest from the hole, and so he plays again, 'One more:' this time he uses one of his iron-headed clubs, lifting his ball clear and neatly across the watercourse, and dropping it within ten yards of the hole. Captain F—— plays his second stroke, or 'the like,' and his ball is run close to the hole. Mr. M—— plays his third to the very edge of the hole, but not into it. Captain F—— plays *his* third, and holes his ball, and therefore wins the first hole.

One—in favour of the Captain. He has the honour of leading, as winning the last, and again strikes off a fairish hit. Mr. M—— follows with one of those beautiful strokes now and then made, the ball flying for fifty or sixty yards close to the ground, and making a high, sweeping curve before alighting: this hole is well contested and halved, each player doing it in equal strokes. Away they go for the third. This is a very ticklish hole, and requires both dash and prudence to make it in five strokes. Well and fairly struck

both. The next stroke equally good. The third the Captain's ball falls short, and drops into a bunker, or sandpit. While M—— lies clear, F—— takes his heavy iron, and aiming for a sloping stroke, and a little below his ball, hits with great force, and the ball, amidst a great puff of sand, is lifted clear of the pit. M——, though not so fortunate as might have been looked for, has yet an advantage, and he brings his skill and care to take full benefit of his better ground, and runs his ball beautifully to the edge of the hole. Of course F—— requires two more strokes to hole, and M—— holes easily in one, and wins this hole. And thus the play is carried on with varied success from hole to hole.

We are now at the far end of the links, and at the turn to play home Captain F—— is one hole ahead. All the way home the play is close and steady. Mr. M—— has succeeded in rubbing off the hole he was behind, and at one period was some holes ahead. When three holes from the finish, they are again equal, the first is divided, the second skilfully won by the Captain, and the last is halved. So Captain F—— wins the match only by one hole: a very equal and capital game.

Let us go into the club, and get some soda and sherry. Many of the players are now in the room, chatting over the events of the first round. Several go round a second time, making, in all, a ten miles' walk, amongst others our friends F—— and M——. But we have had a stiff walk, so it may be better to take a gentle saunter up the links, and see the different players coming in.

Amusing enough it is to note the variety. You see that party of four who have just passed: the match is a gentleman and a professional against another gentleman and a professional. The weakest of the gentlemen gets the best of the two professionals as his partner. They have been playing the same match over and over for weeks, with varied success, but unvaried interest.

See, again, these two elderly men; you can tell at a glance they are not *habitués* of the links, but steady-



Drawn by C. A. Doyle.

• DRIVING •

Drawn by F. Wigman.

HINTS ON CRINOLINE.

[See "Circular Letter to the Daughters of Europe"]

going citizens of some large town; and, as tide is now up, you might safely bet that they have wives and children disporting in the sea. Note the frock coat and light cap of the one and the tight boots of the other—symptoms, plain, of innocence. Still they are strong and eager; and the stouter gentleman—he with the light cap and jolly face—is gloriously triumphant, while the other is grimly receiving counsel from his caddy, and bent on retrieving—but, alas! not to-day. And sorely will he be badgered at the family dinner at five o'clock.

Here you see pass a pair of dandy players, with a lady or two as spectators. There a brace of boys, who

handle their clubs with an *aplomb* that promises future greatness. And thus from day to day goes on the changing and lively pageant, pregnant with health and honest pleasure.

Thus, gentle reader and future golfer, I carry you back; and place you nicely again into your reading chair, not wearied, I trust, with your little excursion into the region of golf. And in saying farewell, let me hope that by-and-by you may be walking with active steps through the links, muscles braced and club in hand; and that, blessing (as bless you must) the day you perused this article, you may include me in the benediction.

T. W.

A CIRCULAR LETTER.

DAUGHTERS OF EUROPE!

NATURE is great, but crinoline is greater!—yea, gramercy, too great. Perambulating bell-tents! caricatures of your sex, let me say a few words to you—let me reason, or even question you. Are you happy in your fortifications? Are you not bored with the weight of clothing? During the Illuminations how you cut the shins, blocked up the road, and otherwise disturbed the peace and happiness of thousands! Tell me how long do you intend to keep your friends away? I would willingly walk with you or drive with you; but really, as the case at present stands, I must beg to decline. I have shins as well as feelings. Let me therefore hope that you will some day see the folly of your costume, and will adopt something more graceful and rational, and not make yourselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world. Do you know that the Japanese ambassadors took crinoline back with them, thinking, very justly, that it was the most curious specimen of European folly they could take? How Moriyama laughed when he told me! Let me beg of you to consider the matter, 'do da deaha.'

How lovely you look at a *bal costumé*, divested of your hideous skirts!

how nimbly and gracefully you flit about, causing the heart of man to be glad and to smile! You appear not the same beings—and were you always so attired, I should love you even unto distraction; but now, alas! it is impossible, and I am compelled once more to fly the country, and return to far-distant lands, where crinoline hath not yet made its appearance, nor ever will, I hope. Cruel ones, thus to drive away one who returned from the East, predisposed to lay his heart at your 'poor feet!' but who is now once more a wanderer and a vagabond. You have broken the spell, dispelled the illusion, and driven him to despair. Yea, I will once more seek the daughters of Kathay, the maids of Chung-kwo (they who wear the breeches!); also will yet find the *Musmés* of Nipon, the skirtless ones, who occupy no space, whose petticoats are circumscribed. I fly! Adieu, women of Europe! Perchance I may once more return, with the hope of finding you lovely as now, but more approachable. Ponder my words—consider the subject—contemplate the Japanese girl in the woodcut, and weep! Farewell! Beware of exalted situations till attired otherwise; and believe in the disinterested advice of your friend,

EKAKISANG.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER.

A London Story.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH OUR SIDE GETS REINFORCED.

THE second Monday after our overhearing the conversation between Agnes and Edith, the latter appeared at the breakfast table. She headed it too, and I must acknowledge that the coffee was much hotter and stronger, and the table much better laid and supplied than when Emily managed it. I thought I ought to appear surprised, though I had quite expected to see her there; so I put on a smiling look, and said—

‘Why, it is not Sunday, is it?’

Edith did not call me ‘hypocrite,’ but she looked it, as, without a word, she turned her back on me, and sat down to the table. I suppose Agnes understood that look, for she was colder than ever, and even silly Emily looked grave.

No one spoke till Nelly came down and took her usual place; then she turned to me and said—

‘Do you know, Mr. West, Georgy is coming home to-day.’

‘And who is Georgy?’ I asked.

‘Why, one of us—our sister, to be sure. You can’t have listened much to our conversation, Mr. West,’ she added, reproachfully, ‘or you would have heard us speak of Georgy. You know she is coming home for—that is, till she can find something else.’

‘Our affairs can’t interest Mr. West, Nelly dear,’ said Edith.

I pretended not to hear her remark, but turned to Nelly, and paid great attention to all she said. She told me that Georgy was a year younger than Edith, but much shorter, and that she was very gay and noisy.

When I returned home in the evening, I met Edith coming out of the drawing-room, with her sleeves tucked up after the fashion of housemaids, when they are doing what they call their ‘work.’ She did not look at all vexed at seeing me; on the contrary, she pointed into the drawing-room, which looked very comfortable, with its drawn curtains and lighted lamp, and said—

‘We shall sit in the drawing-room for the future, Mr. West, at least whilst I am at home to arrange it. I dare say you will find it more suitable to your ideas of propriety to pass the evenings there than in the parlour.’

‘It is certainly more agreeable,’ I replied, stiffly; ‘still I am sorry that you should perform such uncongenial work on my account.’

‘Oh! it is not only on your account. I myself detest sitting with a number of persons in a small room. It is to give myself the luxury of being a lady in the evening that I act the housemaid in the morning. A questionable display of refinement, perhaps, you will think—however, such is the case.’

She gathered up her old dress more tightly as she spoke, and swept down stairs with the dignity of a queen.

I could not make out the change from amused contempt to bitter disdain with which she treated me. I have never lived much with women, certainly never studied their peculiarities. I know their general qualities and distinguishing marks and weaknesses as only books teach them, so if I could not understand Edith Bush I may be excused. If I had known then what I know now of womankind, I should have seen that I personally had very little to do with this change in her temper. I should have guessed that there was some constant anxiety annoying and harassing her, which, acting on a naturally fiery and unbending disposition, produced the effect I noticed.

* * * *

I went down to the drawing-room about half-past seven, and there I found a small, imp-like looking being, dressed in a light flounced muslin with pink ribbons, comfortably lying on the sofa. As I entered she rose up with a bound, tossing her brown curly hair back, and then

looking up at me with the brightest, bird-like looking eyes, said—

‘I suppose you are Mr. West.’

I told her she was quite right in her supposition, and offered to shake hands. She did put her hand in mine, but looking up at me all the time with such quizzical, daring eyes, that I felt impertinence was a family failing.

‘You’ve come from the country, Nelly tells me,’ I said, condescendingly. I had to look such a long way down before I could discover this small young lady, that I felt condescending.

‘Yes, I was governess to the Henleys, in Hertfordshire; but I wasn’t old enough, or grave enough, or something. So—so I’ve come back again.’

That imp a governess! I was silent, thinking what strange people I had dropped among; and wondering why Agnes and Emily didn’t exert themselves to earn something, instead of risking that morsel of a creature on the wide world.

‘I know what you are thinking,’ she exclaimed, suddenly throwing herself into her former position on the sofa. ‘Well, I will tell you why I went out as a governess. You see, papa didn’t wish any of us to go away from home; but when we grew poor, Edith got so disagreeable, that she and I were always quarrelling. Well, papa said he would not live in the house with us, so Edith wanted to go out; but you see she’s such a drudging, housekeeping, economical person—quite the useful, while I am only the ornamental—so the day went against me. But—here I am back again, like a bad shilling.’

I was not surprised to hear the two sisters quarrelled. To compare even their persons—Edith, tall, dignified; Georgy, tiny, saucy-looking, for all the world just like a little worrying gnat—was sufficient to tell you there could not be much harmony between the pair.

‘One comfort is,’ added the young lady on the sofa, ‘if I’ve lost my situation, Edith’s lost hers too; so she can’t make much fuss about me.’

As Georgy spoke Edith entered the room, all trace of the housemaid having disappeared.

She smiled contemptuously as she saw how close to her sister I was sitting, and I was fool enough to get up at once.

At tea, Georgy kept up her reputation for noise and gaiety. She quizzed and imitated every member of the family she had just quitted—she uttered the most absurd nonsense, and kept us all laughing in spite of ourselves. I could see the father scarcely approved of such wild ways before me, and Edith looked annoyed; but the young lady seemed to care very little about either of them, and went on talking and laughing, quite content to be the centre of attraction.

As we were sitting there the servant girl came up to tell me a gentleman wanted to speak to me. She always announced my friends in that style. I rose—I confess rather reluctantly, for I was very comfortably ensconced in a corner of the sofa, and had only just received my second cup from Edith’s hand.

Georgy exclaimed, ‘Well, then, show him up.’ Then, turning to Edith, she added, ‘I can’t say, my dear Edith; Ann’s manners repay all the pains you have bestowed on her.’

‘I wish you would have the kindness to mind your own business, and not give orders here,’ Edith answered, fiercely. ‘Mr. West’s friends are not our friends.’

As she spoke, Smith walked in. Now this was just what my ‘convenient’ friend had often desired; but I, fond as I was of him, did not consider him exactly the man to be introduced into such a family. As I said before, Smith was a clever man, with expensive habits, pleasant manners, and empty pockets. I always believed him to be the soul of honour, so far, of course, as his notions of honour extended.

To come and pour out all his fascinations as homage at the feet of a poor pretty girl, and then, when he had won her affections, but was himself getting a little—a little—why, a fellow should not go *too* far, you know—certainly stood within the limits of his notion.

The idea of a poor man marrying a poor girl never entered his head as

within the limits of the tangible. He even went so far as to think it impossible for even a young girl to entertain such an idea. 'Sentiment, my dear West,' he would say to me, 'is insanity everywhere but in books.'

There was no help for it; my conscience was free, at any rate; and anyhow there stood Smith in the doorway, bowing in a very agreeable manner. I must go forward and introduce him.

Mr. Bush was very gracious; all the daughters, too, except Edith, looked rather pleased than otherwise. That impish little Georgy's influence had already begun to tell.

'May I offer you a cup of tea?' Edith said, coldly, and Smith accepted, very much to her annoyance, for there was none left, and she was obliged to make more. After he had taken it she retired to the back room, and occupied herself in some mysterious manner. It was not with work or reading, nor exactly writing.

Meanwhile Georgy, in the front room, was perfect queen, and divided her gracious attention pretty equally between Smith and myself.

Suddenly Smith noticed the piano, and exclaimed, 'Ah—a piano! Now, Miss Georgy, I'm sure you play.'

'Hush! I should have to ask permission, and at that my pride revolts,' replied the young lady, with a shake of her small person.

'Tell me of whom to ask it, and I will, with the greatest pleasure.'

Georgy pointed over her shoulder into the back room, with a little toss of her head.

'There,' she whispered; 'but don't say I am going to play.'

Smith laughed, and went up to Edith, and returned in an instant dangling a bunch of keys; and then Georgy sat down to the piano and jingled through a few waltzes and polkas, very much to her own satisfaction, if not to that of her hearers.

Smith pretended immense delight, and he was in the midst of some flowery compliments when Ann opened the door, and in walked Mr. Grainger.

I happened to look at Edith as Agnes rose and said, 'Ah, Mr. Grainger, how do you do?'

If ever disgust disfigured a woman's face, it did hers at that moment; still she came forward in another minute, smiling as if delighted to see him. I watched her closely that evening: I was anxious to understand the part she was playing; but she seemed so natural, that if it was a part she acted in encouraging the evident attentions of Mr. Grainger, it was performed to perfection.

* * * *

Another month passed. Smith came constantly, and flirted with Georgy. I found it pleasant enough now, in spite of Edith. We were always well received by the gay, imp-like little Georgy. Emily and Agnes kept a kind of neutral ground, while Mr. Bush was very civil. So, for a time, I had the best of it.

I thought Edith seemed rather more contented, though she never gave us the least encouragement. She left us very much to ourselves, and rather avoided having any wordy war. She would pass me quickly on the stairs, even if she were in her untidiest condition; and she even saw me once knock over a milk-jug, spilling the contents and breaking the jug, without making any offensive remark.

Georgy was very amusing, but distressingly lazy; and I began to distinguish between the refinement that preferred disorder to the shockingness of doing dirty work, and the refinement that, rather than exist amidst confusion, thought nothing of dirtying her hands terribly and washing them again. It was very agreeable to find Georgy always dressed in those tasty muslins, looking fresh and lady-like, with her white hands, and filbert nails, and glossy curls, giving one just an idea of perfume when she passed; but then to be received in a close, dusty, untidy room, to find the tea late when you came home tired, and the water smoky, and the things in your room unarranged, and everything at sixes and sevens—as it was once when Edith suddenly disappeared for a week from H—Terrace, and Georgy took the head of affairs—rather disgusted me with the first kind of refinement.

'The young person seemed in much

better humour when she reappeared—she was even civil; but she never mentioned where she had been, or for what; and I don't think even Georgy knew, or she would have told us. Georgy was very communicative, but we could never discover from her why Edith disliked me so. She said she supposed it was natural disagreeableness, and advised us to act on the offensive. She said it was the only way with Edith: if you didn't bully her, why she would you—it was her nature. She had been born a tyrant, and she supposed she would die one; but, at any rate, she should never tyrannize over her, Georgy Bush.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROPOSED PARTY AT NO. 3, AND WHAT EDITH THOUGHT OF IT.

While Edith was away, Georgy had been trying to work up her sisters to the giving of a small party. Quiet home life didn't at all suit this restless, vain little being, and I think she was even beginning to weary of Smith's constant attentions, and pine after a greater number of admirers.

Georgy was rather an expensive game to Smith. He bought her music, which she couldn't play, but which she said she was dying for; books, which she never read, but which she liked to display to admiring sisters; flowers from Covent Garden, which she allowed to lie about till Edith came with orderly hands to their succour; and latterly I noticed lockets, and bracelets, and brooches constantly varying about the small decked-out person of Miss Georgy.

I couldn't for a moment imagine Smith was in love; I knew his principles too well, still he seemed to be going rather far this time for a man of his age. Smith was over thirty.

I came home about four o'clock one Saturday. As I stood in the hall hanging up my coat, I could see Edith standing by the mantelshelf in the parlour examining a paper. There was a look of trouble about her face quite painful, and I thought to myself, 'Strange that all the anx-

iety of the family should be shifted on to the shoulders of this girl!' Agnes was in the room with her, but she seemed to play no active part.

'I must pay it at once,' I heard Edith say. 'It won't do to let papa see it, with that worry about the bill on the 1st hanging over him. I think I ought to pay it, don't you, Agnes?'

'You know best, dear. It seems dreadfully hard though.'

I saw her go to her desk and take out a cheque-book; then she stooped, tore out a leaf, and filled it up, saying to Agnes, 'When Willie comes in send him at once. If these taxes and rates pour in, and papa's affairs don't turn a little, my poor hoard will soon dwindle.'

She came out and we met. 'Mr. Smith is up stairs again,' she said. Her tone implied annoyance, so I said, 'I hope you don't hold me responsible for the follies of my friend.'

'I am not so unjust,' she answered, coldly. As she passed the drawing-room door, Emily called, 'Oh, come in, Edith; you are just the person we want!'

'Yes,' added Georgy, 'do come and tell us, like a clever thing as you are, how we must manage our party.'

'What party?'

'Oh! didn't you know? Ah! it was while you were away, papa gave us leave to have a party. A quiet one, of course, and Mr. Smith has promised to bring a quadrille friend or two; but we can't decide about the supper.'

Edith stood for an instant silent, looking with her scornful eyes full in her sister's face.

'Are you mad, Georgy? You know such a thing is impossible.'

'When you have talked with us a little, Edith, you will see that, on the contrary, it is very possible,' Georgy said, in her gentlest tone.

'I tell you it can't be, it mustn't be,' the other replied; and she turned to walk away, but the worrying little gnat buzzed round her and intercepted her.

'Now just listen, Miss Edith; you sha'n't tyrannize over us all. We

will have a little reasonable pleasure. Agnes wishes it, Emily, Nelly, Mr. West, Mr. Smith, all of us wish it, all but you, and you sha'n't spoil all our happiness. I tell you I will have this party.'

'You *will*; and where is the money to pay for it?' asked Edith, quietly, but her eyes glowing with passion.

'Papa has it,' answered Georgy, undauntedly.

'You talk like a child, and like a child you must be treated. I tell you again it cannot be.'

'It wouldn't be a great expense, Edith,' put in Emily, 'would it, Agnes?' for Agnes had come in quietly during the discussion.

'I think not. Do be obliging, Edith.'

'Indeed, Miss Edith, we are six to one; you must give in,' Smith laughed. 'West and I will supply the champagne and do our share.'

She gave him a look of utter contempt, then she turned to her sisters.

'I do not speak of Georgy,' she said, in a voice almost breathless with passion, 'but I thought you others had some sense of honour in you.'

'You are unreasonable,' said Emily.

'You are ridiculous,' said Georgy. 'We don't depend on you for our bread, why should we bend and obey you?'

'Besilent, I tell you; don't *you* speak to me,' answered Edith. 'Agnes, Emily, have I ever taunted you with such a thing? Listen now, once and for all. You know what I can do if I choose. Shall I unloose Mr. Grainger among you? Now have the party if you dare.'

She spoke with the calmness of intense passion, and then walked out of the room and went up stairs.

We were all silent for a moment. I don't think any of the sisters but Agnes understood the threat, and she turned dreadfully pale. Georgy recovered first. 'I don't believe a word about it,' she exclaimed, 'and we will dare her and have the party.'

But no one seconded the motion, and we all felt very uncomfortable in consequence of that outburst of the young person's temper.

Georgy was horribly sulky, so Smith, to cheer her up, proposed going to the Opera, for a box at which, he said, he had an order; but which he had not offered before because it was not a very good piece that night, but, under circumstances, he thought it would be better to put up with that and take themselves off.

I knew differently. The truth was Smith had just learnt that Mr. Bush had gone to Paris for a week, leaving an elderly female cousin in nominal charge, who, as Georgy said, 'wouldn't be at all tiresome about anything.'

Agnes shook her head and left the room; she was too lazy to enter into a struggle with that worrying little imp; besides, as she said, 'Though Georgy was small she was only two years younger than herself, and might direct her own actions.' Emily needed little persuasion to follow where her volatile sister led, so we soon agreed and made our plans.

As we sat talking and gradually recovering our spirits, the door opened and Edith came in. She was deadly pale; even her lips were white.

'I have come to say,' she said, in a firm but rather low voice, looking at Smith and me, 'that I regret very much having said what I did in your presence. May I trust to your gentlemanly honour not to repeat it?'

'Most certainly,' we both exclaimed, rising from our seats with as much respect as if a queen had stood before us.

There is something so wonderfully powerful in a woman's dignity. Smith held out his hand. 'If I annoyed you, forgive me, Miss Bush; on my honour it was unintentionally.'

She looked up at him for an instant, and I saw the tears rush, clouding her eyes. Her lips moved to speak, but no words came, and she went swiftly out of the room.

'She didn't say a word, Lewis,' Smith told me afterwards, when we talked the scene over, 'but she gave my hand a clasp, just as one fellow would have another's. There's no humbug about that girl at any rate.'

'After he had taken it she retired to the back room, and occupied herself in some mysterious manner. It was not with work or reading, nor exactly writing.'—See p. 174.

I envied Smith his talent for grappling with opportunity. I might have ended my warfare with Edith at once, I felt, if I had only acted the part he did, but it never entered my head. On the contrary, I dreaded adding to the scene. I could have asked her to play on the piano, sing a song, anything to divert her thoughts; and I am sure those tears of hers affected me quite as much as they did Smith, and I should never have forgiven myself if any word of mine had been the cause of them; and yet—there, I dare say she was considering him a manly, honest fellow, and me a poor, proud, cold fool.

Well, I was vexed, but I couldn't help it.

We went to the Opera, and did not return till nearly twelve o'clock. We heard a magnificent voice singing as we entered, a voice that thrilled through the house.

When we went into the drawing-room we found Edith at the piano, Grainger beside her, and on the sofa, to my utter surprise, sat Wells, playing a game of dominoes with Nelly.

Edith continued her song without noticing our entrance, and, after quietly greeting Wells, we all sat down and listened.

We had just come from the Opera, but I doubt if there was one of us (of course Georgy excepted) who felt that voice inferior to those we had just heard. It might want the artistic finish, but for richness of tone and sweetness certainly it could bear comparison.

As she ended, Grainger came forward to salute me, and Smith went to Edith.

'Indeed, Miss Edith, you hide your candle under a bushel most scrupulously. I have frequented this house for nearly two months and I had no idea you sang.'

'And yet I practise every day,' she answered, smiling. She spoke gently, but seemed weary and unwilling to talk, so Smith let her pass and went back to Georgy, who, by the way, was pouting at his speaking to the enemy; and Edith crossed the room and went and sat down by Nelly, and there stayed with her arm

thrown lovingly round the poor blind child that she might direct her hand in the game.

It was just like Wells's kindheartedness, to pass his evenings playing dominoes and talking childish nonsense to Nelly.

CHAPTER VII.

WE MAKE A GUESS AT EDITH'S SECRET.

After that rather stiff scuffle on Saturday, I felt it would be better to prevent Smith's coming to the house on Sunday, especially as Mr. Bush was absent.

I had a great idea of the young person's spirit, and I thought she was quite capable of making her father settle matters summarily when he returned; and there was something about the grave respectable papa which looked as if he could be roused terribly on occasions.

Now I hate scenes; so directly after breakfast on Sunday morning I drove to Smith's lodgings and persuaded him to go and dine with me at Wells's place, which is about four miles from Richmond.

As I said before, Wells is a quiet kind of fellow, with a wholesome fancy for sticking to the rules his mother taught him—going to church once at least on Sunday, giving money to schools, not playing cards, or drinking spirits, and with a kind of horror of tobacco.

Still he is a clever fellow too. I often fancy he has more real book knowledge than Smith; and that his is more softness of heart than head.

He always goes and spends Sunday in the country with his aunt. This aunt, I must observe, has nothing to do with the property—that all belongs to Wells, who is an orphan, and we have a general invitation to spend Sunday with him.

Smith agreed rather reluctantly. I don't know if the imp really had succeeded in fascinating him, but he certainly spent more time in the female society at H—— Terrace than I had ever known him to do in any other.

We had dinner rather early, and then, as the evening was warm and fine, took our wine and cigars to an

harbour that overlooked the river as it wound on its shiny, placid way from Richmond.

Smith drank and smoked a great deal, then he launched out into his usual wit and humour, and gave Wells and I little trouble in regard to conversation. I think it is our untalkative natures that make us such suitable companions for Smith. However, on that night, on the first opportunity, Wells began to speak of the Bushes.

'However did you get to know Grainger?' I asked. Wells flushed slightly.

'To tell you the truth,' he exclaimed, 'not under the most agreeable circumstances, and I was very sorry to find him on terms of such intimacy at your friends the Bushes. If you had not come to-day I should have gone to you—I wanted so much to tell you all about it. We were passing the evening together (for I have my reasons for keeping friendly with him) when we happened to speak of singing, and he said he knew a lady whose voice, in his estimation, equalled that of any public singer he had heard, and he offered to introduce me to her. He said he was on terms of sufficient intimacy to take me to her house then and there if I chose. I accepted, and you know you found me there.'

'But what connection can he have with the family? that he has some is very evident,' I exclaimed.

'He told me the father was his debtor for 300*l.*, and he said, if it were not for the daughter he would be down on him to-morrow. You should have seen the fiendish look of the fellow as he spoke: he would do as he said, I am sure.'

Smith gave a low whistle.

'Do you remember Edith's words yesterday, Lewis?'

Of course I did, and I understood now a good many things that had been mysterious before. The little hoard she had mentioned, that look of disgust when Grainger entered, and her change of manner in his presence, the economy, the hard working. I understood that now. Was she acting a strictly honourable part?

'He told me,' continued Wells, 'he could arrest the father any day; he called him a sneaking rascal, an old thief; but to be abused by Mr. Grainger I thought no dishonour.'

'And do you really mean to say that Edith is engaged to him?' said I slowly, after a pause.

'He didn't say that; he only implied that ultimately she would be his wife. What surprised me was that such a fellow, such a sneaking, cowardly, money-loving wretch should ever have fallen in love with such a girl. Certainly he is a proud fellow, and he knows the Bushes are of good family, while he—he was the natural son of a pawn-broker.'

Both Smith and I started. These are not the times of chivalry, for knights to ride about succouring distressed ladies and others who require help, and we neither of us felt inclined to be Quixotic; but when Wells said, 'I wish we could do something,' we both heartily echoed the wish.

'Of course,' added he, 'I tell you this in confidence: I can assure you, if you knew Grainger—the gambling, drinking blackguard!—as I do, you would feel it almost a Christian duty to warn Edith Bush against him.'

Warn her! Poor girl, that disgustful look I remembered so well, showed she required no warning.

We talked on for some time, deploring very much poor Edith's position, and arguing whether it was honourable or not. I must confess that though we were men, and of course in the general way condemn a woman trifling with a man's feeling, we acquitted Edith, and extolled her conduct. I am sure Wells considered it heroism: Smith said it was more fit for a novel than real life—and I, I thought—alas! for poor human nature—poor degraded human nature, some call it. I wish they would show us how and why it is degraded.

Smith said it wasn't degraded: he called it our natural condition, and talked about man's own institutions as the causes of misery. But he never mentioned Adam and Eve, and he always does talk such free,

‘I could see Edith standing by the mantelshelf in the parlour examining a paper. There was a look of trouble about her face quite painful, and I thought to myself, “Strange that all the anxiety of the family should be shifted on to the shoulders of this girl!”’—See p. 175.

utter nonsense on such matters, particularly after he has been sitting with a cigar and a bottle of wine for an hour after dinner.

I don't know what Georgy would have said to hear him talk, and especially to have heard no mention of her in his conversation.

When we returned to H—— Terrace, I found Grainger sitting up in the drawing-room, but Edith was not there. She had not yet come from church. I don't know whether Grainger was afraid of our being so constantly in the company of his lady-love, or not, but he was unusually savage and disagreeable.

In vain Georgy tried her fascination; he refused all conversation, but sat doggedly waiting Edith's arrival.

When she entered, she came up to him with a bright, smiling countenance, looking very handsome; but he received her sulkily, and sat on the sofa looking as dogged and savage as ever. Suddenly he started up and exclaimed—

'Will you go to the Popular Concert to-morrow, Edith?'

She looked up at him in a half-surprised, half-indignant manner.

'You know, Mr. Grainger,' she answered, quickly, 'I have always declined going anywhere in public without my father; you know it is a principle with me.'

He looked very angry, but he was silent. A few minutes afterwards he said to me—

'I find, Mr. West, that Wells is an intimate friend of yours.'

'Very intimate,' I replied; 'I

knew him first at Oxford, and we have been great friends ever since then; indeed I have just come from his place, where Smith and I have been dining; he mentioned to me his acquaintance with you.'

'Acquaintance! why does he call himself a mere acquaintance? does he think I should have brought a mere acquaintance here last night, and told him what I did?'

Edith looked round uneasily, and I saw almost a smile pass over Grainger's face as he caught her eye.

'Well,' he added, rising, evidently having shot the arrow he wished, and seen it strike, 'it's getting late. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow, or, at farthest, the next day,' he said, turning to Edith. 'Good night.'

She shook hands with him in her usual manner, and went as far as the head of the stairs with him.

Can she mean to marry him, or is she an excellent actress? thought I.

She did not re-enter the drawing-room, but went up stairs into the little room.

The next morning, when she came down to breakfast, her face was very pale, and her eyes had the dark heavy look of one who had not slept. She left the breakfast table before any of us, saying, 'If I am not at home by six, don't wait.'

As she spoke, the postman came to the door and brought her a letter. Her face brightened as she reads, afterwards she threw it to Agnes, merely saying, 'Private,' and went out.



THE GUARDS' BALL.

IT was only a bill! Why did it look stiff and broad, if it did not contain the card? Malicious, to say the least.

The sight of small notes had become abhorrent to me, and now the big envelope proved a delusion. *Misera me.* It would not come at all.

The invitations were out—had I not seen them? Had not Laura and Fanny, and ever so many others, got theirs?

Truly a hollow world! Could I any longer wonder at Lieut. Simon Styletes? If there were a pillar in Battersea Park (or any other desert place far off), would it not be most natural that I should on its summit take up my abode?

I went upstairs slowly, and, taking off my bonnet, gazed at the dark and gloomy reflection of my disappointed face.

'Let me be brave,' thought I. 'Let me rise superior to this great misfortune. If I am not to be present at the Guards' Ball, at least let me find pleasure in the enjoyment of others.'

I smiled convulsively at myself. Alas! I could not smile. A deep and yellow fog obscured the windows of my mind—a London particular—shrouding the daylight of my thoughts, forcing me to light the lamp of philosophy in the very noonday, to see my way along the path of life.

A lesson to me, indeed, on human nature. How firmly had I believed in that faithless 'Deuxtemps!' How tenderly granted little Sabretache's petition for 'one more turn!' Had I not waited during a whole Lancers', to let that greedy De' Spurs eat lobster salad at Lady Foozle's? Had I not done *des bassesses*, to procure a card for Charlie Fairweather to Mrs. Particular's ball? And not one of them had remembered me.

Languidly I went down stairs, and turned over 'Punch' on the drawing-room table. What was that beyond the workbox? what? white—flat—square—The Card!

'There in the twilight cold and grey,
Lifeless but beautiful it lay.'

Is Longfellow—is any poet equal to the description of that sight? My feelings were too much for me. Dear little 'Sabretache!' Best of 'Deuxtemps!' May thy appetite never diminish, De Spurs; thy shadow never be less, Charlie Fairweather! It was a relief to open the photo. book and gaze fondly at them as they leant confidently on their umbrellas, their backs turned resolutely on Mons. Silvy's fairest landscapes.

The day had come at last. Guardsmen, preoccupied and dusty, rushed in Hansoms to and from Kensington. 'Nothing will be ready in time,' the men said who were not asked. 'It will be a curious mixture,' said the girls not invited. It seemed a mockery to me to spend that day like others—to ride, shop, and drive, as usual; so I spent my day chiefly in vague perambulations up and down stairs, in search of undecided employment, till seven. For 'we must start at half-past eight—at half past punctually,' said my chaperon.

It was with surprise, mingled with admiration, that I discovered my own features under the structure that Mons. Frisette created on my head, and with triumph that I sought in vain for any trace of my figure in the masses of tulle with which Madame Boullion had surrounded me. 'My success is certain,' said I, when I had failed for the third time to get through the doorway.

'You had better take some superlatives with you,' little Sabretache said to me; 'you will want them all;' and he was quite right.

There was no string—we whirled up to the broad pavement and got out at once. 'A little late, or rather early,' Mamma feared.

I was too much awestruck to make any conjecture. A vision of scarlet and gold flashed on me as I entered the great building, where, last summer, such cruel, dusty, pushing and squeezing had left its marks on me; and when I stood at the foot of the staircase, and looked up the line of beautiful brave Guardsmen,

with their bearskins and shining bayonets, I felt as if to speak would break a spell, and dissolve what could only be a dream.

Fair white dresses on the crimson steps fell like scattered snowflakes here and there, between the dark glittering figures. That silent, fragrant entry was a fit preparation for

the fairy scene beyond. We walked on velvet carpets through a saloon into the loveliest summer bower ever built by nature's finger. From a bed of crimson blossom, flowers of every tint, rose in terraces to caress the pearly fountain, whose twin was reflected in the mirrored panels of an ivy-curtained screen be-

yond; brilliant azaleas, stately lily plants, looked forth from the drooping creepers that clustered everywhere, and clung round the gilded cornices.

'Suggestive of rural felicity,' somebody said—'highly suggestive.'

We lingered among the flowers, and made our way slowly up the brilliant jewelled rows in the ball-room, living pictures more beauti-

ful, and if not quite so highly painted, at least as costly as those that graced its walls last summer.

I was still in a state of open-eyed amazement at the splendour, still wondering at the duchesses, staring at the countesses, and recognizing the beautiful red Guardamen, when the band struck up. A thrill of loyal feeling was mingled with the pain of crushed toes and bent crino-

lines; for all the world pressed forward to see, and all the world was pressed back to make room for the Royal Guesta. 'Get me a partner! Quick! quick! Introduce me to some one,' a Guard said, close to me, and much regretting that the old lady to whom he applied had not selected me for the purpose,

I saw a great quadrille form itself, and begin, led by the royal quartette.

Whether a latent spice of the snob then developed itself, or whether it really merited my opinion, I know not, but my admiration of royal dancing was immense. Superlatives were too weak to express my appreciation.

'So 'also will I dance,' thought I, and wished that in so carrying my head I might have carried like sparkling diamonds.

There were rows of ladies all down the sides of the room, seated on red seats, and there were rows and rows pushing their way up, past, and when they could, over me. 'Why should I be pushed? why not push?' said I; and took my stand desperately.

Calmly the dowagers came on, smiling grimly at a distant acquaintance;—A moment's shock of steel

to steel.—Momentum gained the day—the attraction of gravitation was 'nowhere.' Slowly, but surely, I felt myself turned round, and separated *for ever* from some yards of ribbon and a bunch of flowers off my unlucky and beloved gown. My idea of my own disposition is, candidly, that I am Justice personified; yet I must confess to having found that the approach of a partner in scarlet, or one in black, awoke the most different feelings. No offence to A, B, or C,—no, nor to dear G, who gave me my first 'canter;' but

one *does* dance better with scarlet—it is quite natural! Look at bulls and turkey-cocks; do they not dance, and dance very much, when they see the colour: why not young ladies?

It was painful also to find oneself alive to low and animal propensities in such a fairy scene; but I own to having become so frightfully hungry that I could have eaten the artificial cherries off my neighbour's head had I not at last been taken into the refreshment-room. 'I want some champagne; so will you come with me?' my friend said to me, as he offered his arm; but he was better than his word, for he gave me pink and yellow topaz nectar out of crystal barrels, in gold and silver goblets, and treated me in general like a princess in a fairy tale. Beyond the buffet was a region veiled by silken curtains, opened later, where white soups and mayonaises ineffable were to be had, and where the gorgeousness of every possible or probable object are beyond description. I believe that the cakes I ate were of powdered silver, flavoured with essence of rubies and diamonds.

And here let me offer one little hint to the uninitiated—those less knowing than myself—a hint which very small experience will prove wholesome.

Go not, O fair one, into supper with that swiftest of waltzers, that lightest of fantastic toes, that most subtle dancer of Lancers' and quadrilles. His eye will wander restlessly to the ball-room; his ear listen, not to the sweet tale of all your wants, but to the first notes of the dance for which he is engaged to one who will be revenged if he come not.

Nay, go with a married man, one no longer young, and who seeks not in the frivolous, but in the tangible pleasures of the world, solace for its many trials: go with him—I did; and returned to dance like a giant refreshed.

And what dancing it was! what a floor—what music—what everything!

My dress and I parted company considerably. I did not care; the

finest of the fine picked up my tatters, and was generous in pins to repair the mischief; he had the pleasure due to him of caricaturing me afterwards. I had the pins. Let each be satisfied.

It was towards the middle of the evening—of the night rather, that, all honour being due, not to the English regiments of the Brigade only, but to the Scottish also, the war strains of the bagpipe echoed through the ball-room, and a reel fast and furious was danced. A reel—two reels—reels innumerable, interwoven and alternate, as only Scotch reels can be; delightful to all lovers of nationality, noise, and strong exercise.

Kilts there were none, nor waving tartans; but what yelling and flinging aloft of legs and arms could do, was done, and those that were not delighted must at least have been amazed at the spectacle that procured them rest of some minutes from the dancing in which they could join.

I do not at all wonder at the medical student, who, conquered by his longing, entered uninvited, and partook of the delight of that charming ball. I don't know that I should have chosen the floor of the buffet for my resting-place when I was tired. But I think when in durance vile he was requested to repent of his misdemeanours, he must have thought the price small that he had paid for his pleasure. And I will venture to say he was more intoxicated by the beauty of the faces than the excellence of the wine.

'Could it be four o'clock?'

'Five, if you please; look at the gas.' A soft, pure light was falling on the feathery dresses and sweet bright faces in the ball-room. Group by group the golden star-clusters of light were disappearing, and the dawn was looking kindly at us behind a veil that softened its too candid scrutiny. Still the musicians played bravely: like the cherub they 'sat up aloft.' Still the dancers flew round and round: only the row of wallflowers thinned, a stream of hungry happy ones reached that haven of their hope,

the supper-room, before they left—what must have been a glorious penance hitherto.

Let it be pulled down—let its walls be razed, if they will, but let

a monument of gratitude be erected on the spot, in that great International, where the Guards gave the best ball ever given in London. *Deus!*—I have spoken.

THE MODERN ART OF ADVERTISING.

THERE is a worldly wisdom continually crying aloud at the corners of the streets and arresting a considerable amount of popular attention—a wisdom which, utterly discarding the theory of happiness that would teach mankind to make their wants few, is never tired of reminding us how long we have been satisfied without obtaining possession of those things which properly-constituted minds have recognized as necessities.

Of the thousand conveniences that 'nobody should be without,' a large percentage becomes so notorious that we dare not acknowledge our ignorance of the comforts they profess to bestow. Of the thousand worthless inventions which are pushed into public notice by loud reiteration of their supposed qualities, a still larger proportion finds purchasers who cannot doubt the testimony of big placards and favourable certificates.

'Nothing is done now without advertising' has become an indisputable statement in relation to almost every trade where there is any possibility of competition; and even the quietest, sternest representatives of the quiet old steady-going men of business, who rejoiced in their scorn of a puff, and long held fast to the proverb, that 'Good wine needs no bush'—have latterly been compelled to adopt the new method which has been introduced by the revolution effected through advertisements.

There is, doubtless, much to be said in favour of our present system, and to people really 'in want' of an article intended to serve a desired purpose, there can be no excuse on the score of ignorance, and much unnecessary trouble is saved: at the same time industry and invention are stimulated, and many actual wants are created which indirectly improve the condition of mankind.

Having frankly, and with considerable difficulty, admitted this much, it is surely excusable to point out the lamentable results which our present system of advertising have brought upon a number of individuals who have a right to be considered, and of whom the present writer is one.

In the first outburst of the advertising mania—the most startling symptoms of which were enormous placards announcing ‘monstre concerts’ and ‘cheap clothing’—the government wisely interfered to prevent huge and sometimes revolving structures of timber, pasteboard, and *papier mâché*, from being drawn through the streets by horses, to the obstruction of roadways and the danger of her Majesty’s subjects. The class of which the present writer is one—the nervous, the hypochondriac, the irritable portion of the London public—may I add that portion of the public possessing a refined organization and a high sense of moral responsibility?—these, I say, were very grateful for this; but what the better are we off at this moment, when the entire street architecture of this great metropolis is emblazoned with garish posters—when every blank wall smells of printers’ ink, and all London seems to have entered into a conspiracy to shout emphatic falsehoods in letters two feet long?

If anything could add to the horror occasioned by this state of things, it would be the miserable want of appropriateness which characterizes the mode of advertising. There was once a chance of an obnoxious ‘bill,’ exhibited on a builder’s hoarding, being overlaid by another less repulsive; but now that the ‘bill-posters’ have themselves become capitalists, and buy up acres of dead wall and temporary fence for their exclusive use, the public is entirely at their mercy; and while the palings enclosing the site for a new chapel flame with dramatic sensations,—the exterior walls of harmonic retreats contain parochial announcements or appeals to the working classes.

Why should an individual with the physical and moral organization

above alluded to be continually startled by the impertinent questions and the still more impertinent assertions which stare upon him on every side? There is at least some redress for us if we are suddenly assaulted, or if we are knocked down and run over by a careless driver in the public streets; and it may be well maintained that these verbal assaults are even more brutal,—these shameless insults to our sensibility more flagrant than any more physical violence. It is true that I have known of very severe personal accidents resulting from a strong north-east wind, and its effects upon the itinerant advertisers who carry great placards upon wooden frames; but these are nothing to the injuries of which I complain.

For what reason, let me ask, am I to be haunted, even in the seclusion of my own house, with inquiries from the opposite wall,—why I pay more than I *do* pay for all sorts of articles of domestic use?—why I do not double up my bedsteads?—whether I know where to go for the commonest necessities of life? Why does some persistent child (I have no family) continually address me as papa, and ask me to take it to some terrible bazaar or toy shop? Why, above all, am I (not advised) but absolutely commanded to eat and drink all sorts of things which would disagree with me;—to read half a dozen newspapers and periodicals (lying publications), each of which has a considerably larger circulation than ‘any other’? Why, above all, am I insulted by being made to speak for myself: and after having seen quite enough of sensation dramas for a lifetime, to declare that I want to see any of them again?

Some of the questions are, on the face of them, grossly immoral. I remember having seen quite an eruption of little black bills on a fence near my house, inquiring if I wanted a cheap funeral; while in some others, addressed to the working classes, the question was artfully insinuated, ‘Why pay rent?’ There was an attempt to explain this shameful question away by some allusion to a building society I

admit; but that is very little to the purpose.

The suburbs of London are distinguished, either by a more glaring display of colour in the bills which adorn the walls, or by a mere reliance upon size as regards the letters. The inhabitants must, many of them, be reduced to the last stage of indignation at the impudent meddling with their affairs which many of these remarks display; or at all events at the assumption of confidential smartness with which they appeal to vulgar readers. I referred the origin of the advertising mania to the *monstre concerts* and the cheap clothiers, but, in reality, the actual parents of the funny and confidential, and therefore inexpressibly vulgar announcements were the itinerant vendor of ginger beer and the marine store dealer.

Who cannot remember that painted board which adorned the red and blue ginger beer truck, once seen in the streets, but now seldom to be found, except at fairs and on the roadside, by commons and open pleasure-grounds? The design was singularly infelicitous, inasmuch as on a broiling July day it depended for effect solely on recollections of the Christmas pantomime. There was clown, who, speaking from a long inflated bladder protruding from his mouth, was supposed to say, 'Here we are, try our ginger pop;' while to add force to his illustration of its merit, he had just discharged the cork from a bottle into the eye of pantaloon. Meanwhile, a short-waisted lady, with a large parasol, and a gentleman in a light-blue body coat, recorded their conviction 'that that *was* the shop for ginger-pop.'

The present style of theatrical advertisement is so obviously borrowed from the marine store dealer, that there can be no other proof required of the decay of the British drama.

That there may be many unenlightened, shall I say miserably misguided people, over the border of London, to whom slangy appeals are not offensive, I am afraid must be conceded, else why did I have thrust into my hand the other day

a bill which, emanating from a tailor's shop in Whitechapel, spoke of the proprietor as 'a kicksies builder,' and made known the fact that as he had 'just made his escape from America, not forgetting to put his mauleys on some of the right sort of stuff,' he was in a position, having 'some ready in his kick, to grab the chance' of buying some material for his business? After reading this, I was scarcely surprised to learn that 'Upper Benjamins' were 'built on a downy plan,' that 'Moleskins built hanky panky,' and 'with artful buttons at bottom,' were quoted at 'half a monarch,' or that some other articles of wearing apparel were generally disposed of as 'mud pipes,' 'knee caps,' and 'trotter cases.' Beyond the suburbs themselves the advertisements extend as they decrease in size; but still on park walls, railway arches, and canal bridges the weary public are enjoined to 'try' everything, from gin to soothing syrup, and are furthermore conjured to 'COUGH NO MORE.'

Our public conveyances are but traps in which the tired wayfarer is forced to seek some distraction from the wretched accommodation afforded him by perpetually repeating to himself the form of words from which he fancies he has found a temporary refuge. Almost in despair, and at the suggestion of a friend, I was recently induced to engage that description of cab known as 'a Hansom,' to take me to 'the West End.' There, at least, I believed I should be free from torment. But with a refinement of ingenuity little less than diabolical, an oval announcement of cheap cutlery had been placed on the splash-board, there to stare me mercilessly in the face.

'The West End' itself is of course a saturnalia of advertisements. Announcements that 'He is coming' vie in intensity of colour with blatant injunctions to eat, buy, and see everything; till in a wild jumble of The Duke's Motto, elastic garters, Revalenta Arabica, food for cattle, Morison's pills, the Cure, anti-garotters, and the Original Nerves, the afflicted observer seeks a refuge

in the nearest tavern, where he is fortunate if he doesn't find the very pipe-lights to be mere cardboard slips printed with some sensational recommendation; and will, perhaps, afterwards discover that a circular playbill has been pasted inside his hat by some unseen agent of an enterprising manager.

Of those poor decrepit and suffering creatures, the wretched heralds of every novelty in turn, the wearers of those ghastly tabards which sometimes shock humanity by the strange want of harmony between their inscriptions and the appearance of those who are clothed by them, much might be said. To have seen a procession of old, greasy, and napless men, each of whom was labelled 'The Angel of Midnight,' was startling. To see a poor fainting creature sink from starvation under the burden of announcing 'good and cheap dinners,' was painful; but it was left to one of the representative men of Mr. George Cruikshank to achieve the sublime in this sort of illustration. It was no fault of Mr. Cruikshank, of course; the moral of his great picture was and is obvious—was and is striking: that too convivial herald, faithfully represented by the artist, had never had an opportunity of taking the lesson to his soul.

Wasn't the thing almost a public scandal? Imagine the inveterate toper—the humble worshipper of Bacchus, proposing the health of Mr. Cruikshank with the usual sentiment, 'May he ne'er want a friend nor a bottle to give him!'

I have scarcely been able to walk the West End streets since this last occurrence. Not altogether in consequence of that, however, but because of a very extraordinary accident which befel me recently on my return to town after a short excursion. I was coming home by an evening train on the Blank Dashton Railway, and as we stayed three minutes and a quarter for refreshments, contrived to swallow a cup of hot coffee, and to scramble in a very inflated condition into a carriage just as the train was starting. I had entered a second or third class carriage by mistake, and after a

hurried glance round imagined it to be empty; until I was seized with a violent and disagreeable hiccough, the result, I believe, of the coffee. It was at that moment that, looking up from the newspaper over which I had been glancing by the uncertain light, I saw a large burly man who held in his hand a great pill-box. This he extended towards my face, until I read, printed on the lid, 'If this should meet the eye of any one troubled with ——.' I was about to thank him, when I was conscious of a dark solemn gentleman at my elbow who whispered in a sepulchral tone, 'Look to your legs.' To hear was to obey. I glanced, not without misgiving, at those limbs. 'Do your trousers fit you?' said a third dapper-looking traveller, who at that moment appeared on the opposite seat and spoke reproachfully. 'To those who have tender feet,' murmured a voice in the corner. 'Let those who are troubled with gout or rheumatism take these pills,' interrupted a sonorous passenger who held in his hand a box similar to the last. 'No more pills nor any other kind of medicine,' retorted an unseen voice. 'It was observed by Dr. Johnson,' resumed the former speaker, persistently. 'Thirty-seven port and matchless sherry,' murmured somebody in the corner. 'Pure and invigorating essence,—bloom of roses and indelible hair-dye;—waterproof leggings—invisible wigs—self-fastening stays—repressible crinolines—surely the prettiest dress worn by boys this hundred years,' said all the passengers, at once plunging into general remarks, but evidently referring to me as the object of conversation. Suddenly I felt some ligature bound tightly round my body. I knew it in an instant; it was a strangely-formed metal band for the cure of goodness knows what; I'd seen its portrait as adjusted to the human figure hundreds of times. Sharp throbs shot through my chest and penetrated every limb. 'Compose yourself,' said a calmly cruel voice at my elbow; 'no pain will be felt in removing either decayed teeth or stumps.' I saw the glitter of the dental instruments, and as they

flashed before my eyes, made a desperate effort to throw off my assailant.

'Hullo, guv'nor! wake up, and don't go knockin' your head agin the lantern that way:—we're a goin' to shunt off the carriages: lucky I happened to look in; an' you all by

yourself too. Where are we! Why London.'

There were no other passengers in the carriage, but the hideous tokens of their presence were blankly staring at me from the wooden panels in the shape of numberless advertisements.

LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER, 1863.

OFF SCARBOROUGH.

'WE'LL RUN UP THE "UNION" AND SEE WHAT PAPA SAYS.'

London Editors and Reporters.

NO. II.

NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND POLITICAL WRITERS.

THE name of Woodfall is a landmark in the history of the newspaper press. It marks the close of one epoch and the beginning of another.

It is permanently associated with the latest and the most celebrated of those literary politicians who used the columns of the news-

paper for their own purposes, and it also introduces that feature which is now the most noticeable in our modern newspapers. One Woodfall was the publisher of 'Junius;' another began the modern system of parliamentary reporting.

There were two brothers of the name. The sons of a respectable and flourishing printer in the City of London, they followed their father's business, and extended it. Henry Sampson Woodfall was the printer of the 'Public Advertiser,' to whom 'Junius' sent his communications anonymously, never through the long period of their correspondence taking off his mask, and at last making over to him the entire copyright of the letters, in token of the honourable manner in which the printer had stood by the author. William Woodfall became the printer of the 'Morning Chronicle,' which was started in 1769. His connexion with the mechanical department led to other engagements, and he soon afterwards added to his duties those of editor and reporter. Division of labour was a branch of political economy little discussed in those days, though, no doubt, men practised it long before they found a scientific name for it; but the truth was, there was not at that time in any of these departments labour enough to divide. Of his triple duties, the effects of only one has come down to us. The early sheets of the paper are in the hands only of antiquaries, or lie on the shelves of the British Museum; so that few can know how he discharged his calling either as printer or editor. But of his reporting, the press traditions are full; and, after making every allowance for the exaggerated expressions of those to whom the whole process of reporting was new, his work was a wonderful feat, and such as justly to entitle him to the designation of 'Memory Woodfall,' by which he was generally known.* It was his practice to go down early to the House of Commons, and secure for himself a favourite corner in the

front row of the strangers' gallery. There he sat the long night through, never budging from his place, solacing himself, as he grew faint, with the indigestible but portable dainty of a hard-boiled egg, and with his eyes and his attention fixed upon the various speakers, but without taking a single note: the appearance of a note-book or pencil would have led to immediate expulsion by the sergeant-at-arms or his messengers. He would absorb, as it were, the whole scene passing before him, and would reproduce it on paper, to the extent of several columns, in time for the publication of the following evening. In this way he gave a character to the 'Chronicle,' which raised it far above all its contemporaries. Other papers, of course, followed in his wake; literary men, blessed with good memories, became in great demand, and were liberally paid—as literary pay went in those days—to devote their nights to the gallery of Parliament, and their days to writing out as much of what had passed there as they could recollect; but, so long as he had to encounter only single reporters, Woodfall outdistanced them all. Some of them might be equal to him in one part of the work, others in another; one man might remember as much, another might express it as elegantly, and a third might reproduce it with as much despatch; but Woodfall had the union of all three, to an extent which none of them could match. In that feature which was most apparent to the reader, and in which they were most interested, some of his contemporaries were woefully behind him. It was no uncommon thing for some of them to be seven days in arrear with their parliamentary debates. As the memory of each unwritten day's proceedings grew dim with the fresh overlaid stratum of the subsequent debates, it may be imagined that, when they did at last appear, it was in a vapid and colourless form. Woodfall, on the contrary, was always methodical, and always punctual; the debates were never delayed beyond the following evening, so that members going down to the House might purchase on the way the report of

* We are indebted to H. D. Woodfall, Esq., for permission to copy the accompanying portrait from an oil-painting in the possession of the family.—[Ed. L. S.]

"MEMORY WOODFALL,"
THE FATHER OF MODERN "REPORTING."

From a Portrait in the possession of the Family.

what they said on the evening before. The very perfection to which he had carried his system led to its downfall. He could not be beaten by individual skill, he might be overpowered by numbers. If he did the work of six men, the obvious resource of a rival was to engage six men to do the work, and this way was not long in being struck out.

The first suggester was James Perry, a name still more extensively known in connection with the newspaper press than that of Woodfall himself. Perry was a native of Aberdeen, where his father was a house-carpenter. In his native town the name was, and still is, spelt Pirie, but the young adventurer softened it as he came south. His early life was an adventurous one. He acquired the rudiments of education in one of the parish schools, to which Scotland and Scotchmen owe so much, and was for three years a student in the Marischal College of his native town. He then became articled to a Mr. Fordyce, an attorney, or 'advocate,' as the Aberdeen solicitors insist on being called; but, while conning the intricacies of Scotch law, things were not going well at the paternal hearth. His father had fallen into difficulties, and it is probable that the son never cared much for the law—at least so we infer from his next movement; for a company of strolling players coming to Aberdeen, he was induced to join them, and made a theatrical campaign in the neighbouring towns of Montrose, Dundee, Arbroath, Perth, &c. It does not appear that his associates rated his histrionic talents very highly. The most important character he was intrusted with was that of Sempronius, in Addison's tragedy; and it is even said that he was occasionally employed to relieve the dulness of the acting by dancing a hornpipe between the acts. As the company proceeded southward, and approached the more genteel region of Edinburgh, their opinion was still more plainly pronounced. Digges, the manager, politely bowed him out of the company, with the consoling assurance that his Aberdonian brogue

would be an insuperable bar to theatrical success. Thus thrown upon the world, he turned his attention to commerce, and, proceeding to Manchester, he obtained a situation as a clerk in the establishment of a Mr. Dinwoodie, whose name sufficiently intimates his Scottish origin, and accounts for Perry finding employment in his office. He remained here two years, and discharged his duties with painstaking fidelity. But for all that, the ledger was as unsuited to his tastes as the law had been before; and, taking leave of his employers, he started for London, as many of his countrymen had done before him, determined to devote himself to literature.

The story of his first connection with newspapers is curious enough, though we dare say there are many brilliant ornaments of the profession who could tell as singular tales of the lucky chances which first led them in that direction. Perry had come to London with introductions to several booksellers, meaning to begin life, as Johnson and other famous men had begun it before him, as a publisher's drudge. But work at that time happened to be not very plentiful, and to all his applications a negative answer was returned. About that time a new paper had been started, under the title of the 'General Advertiser,' and Perry, by way of amusing his enforced leisure, struck off sundry light sketches, varied with occasional letters to the editor, which he dropped into the letter-box of the office, without any name affixed to them. As he found these articles were invariably inserted, he was led on step by step to write more; but it does not appear that he ever thought of introducing himself to the editor as the author of the sketches that found so much favour in his eyes. Fortune was to visit him from another quarter; for, in the midst of this literary employment, he did not forget the purpose for which he came to London, but went on in his daily and discouraging calls on the booksellers for employment. One day he called on Messrs. Richardson and Urquhart, a publishing firm, to whom, among others, he had had in-

roductions. He saw Mr. Urquhart, a countryman of his own, who was engaged in reading the 'Daily Advertiser.' Scarcely lifting his eyes from the paper, he returned the usual cold negative answer; and then moved by some sudden impulse, he said to him, 'If you could write such an article as this, I would find you immediate employment.' He pointed, as he spoke, to an article in the 'Advertiser,' which Perry on glancing at, recognized as his last anonymous contribution. Of course he claimed it, closed with the offer of the worthy publisher; and to prove that he was not imposing on his credulity, he produced from his pocket another article of the same nature, which he was on his way to deposit in the editorial letter-box. To him that interview was the stroke of fate, for Messrs. Richardson and Urquhart were the principal proprietors of the paper; and Mr. Perry's articles proved that he was just the kind of young man they wanted. Modern newspaper men will smile, and modern newspaper proprietors will envy, when they learn what was considered the fair remuneration for a newspaper writer in those days. For his daily services on the 'Advertiser' he accepted a salary of a guinea a week, with an extra half-guinea for any services he might render to an evening paper with which the firm was also connected. Nor let it be supposed that the work was proportioned to the pay. For this pittance all Perry's powers were devoted to the service of his employers. Among his other duties he was employed to report, that having become a prime qualification for a newspaper man; and he soon had an opportunity of proving his powers.

The nation was then in the heat of the American war, but that war had gradually changed its character. From an arrogant and presumptuous attempt to coerce what was deemed a mere handful of colonists, it had become a struggle for existence; for all the great powers of Europe had gloated over our difficulties, and finally joined with the colonists in the attempt to circumscribe our

dominion and cripple our power. It was then, as still more conspicuously on a later occasion, England against the world; and at each time the proud spirit of the islanders rose superior to every effort to subdue it. France was the first to adopt this ungenerous method of wiping out the memory of former defeats; and the nation fully accepted the issue. Perhaps the Ministers of King George III. were never more popular than on the day when they announced the declaration of war against France. Party spirit was, for the time, fused in the crucible of patriotism. On all sides came promises of support to the ministers; and they, not to be outdone in public spirit, chose the admiral for the fleet, that was at once ordered to be fitted out, from among the ranks of the opposition. Admiral Keppel left England in the midst of as high-wrought expectations of conquest as another popular admiral left our shores a few years ago for the Baltic; and these expectations were doomed to be as completely disappointed. The hostile fleets met off Cape Ushant; the English failed in forcing them into close action, and the French celebrated a triumph because they had not been destroyed. The mortification at home was deep and bitter; the friends of the admiral threw the blame on Sir Hugh Palliser, second in command, who had been selected from the ministerial ranks for the very purpose, it was said, of thwarting and bringing discredit on the popular chief. The quarrel ended in a court-martial being held on both officers, which was held at Portsmouth, and lasted for six weeks. It was this court-martial that brought out young Perry's aptitude for newspaper work. He was sent down to report the proceedings of the court; and it is said that day by day, for six weeks together, he was in the habit of sending up a report which occupied five or six columns of the newspaper. He thus far outstripped his rivals; and as the trial was the theme of universal interest, the 'Advertiser' was sought for everywhere, and the reputation of the

reporter was largely increased. It was then something quite new on newspaper work, though, doubtless, it has often been surpassed since. The columns, of course, bore no proportion to the Brobdignagian lengths of the present day. There is no court in the country so favourable to reporting as a court-martial, for every question must be put in writing by the interrogator, then read over to the court, and if they approve of it, and allow it to be put to the witness, it is copied out in full by their clerk, and then read over to the witness before he is allowed to answer; and when he has done so the answer he gives is recorded in full before another question can be put. Of course, Mr. Perry would be able to write at least as quickly as the clerk of the court. And for the pleadings, we may be sure that Mr. Perry would content himself with a pretty full outline of the counsel's speech, embracing the principal points and indicating the special bearing of his argument—such a summary, in fact, as that we see in a first-class newspaper of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he brings forward his budget. The real marvel lay in his being able to continue at his monotonous task, unflagging from day to day for six whole weeks together.

Soon after this, Woodfall left the 'Morning Chronicle,' apparently in some quarrel with the proprietors, and commenced a new journal which he called the 'Diary.' To this paper he carried his peculiar facilities for gallery reporting, which he apparently expected would do as much for the 'Diary' as they had formerly done for the 'Chronicle.' He did not seem to have been afraid of a new system of reporting which Perry had first introduced on the 'Advertiser,' and which he now elaborated and arranged on a more complete scale on the 'Chronicle,' to which he succeeded on Woodfall's retirement. For though Perry himself was nearly a match for Woodfall in his own department of reporting; yet he knew the work required special ca-

pabilities which were seldom to be found in the same individual. He therefore devised an arrangement by which not one man but several should do the work; and thus inaugurated the system which continues in force to the present day. The arrangement, however, must, in the first instance, have been crude and imperfect; and Woodfall, confident of his own powers, waged a tough, though, in the end, a losing battle with his less capable but more numerous rivals. We can fancy the disdain, not unmixed with fear, which the old man would entertain for this irruption upon the territory where he had so long reigned supreme; and all the traditions of that period which have come down to us indicate those feelings. He is represented (whilst known to be a genial man in private life—a kind husband and father) as a rather taciturn man, holding no communication with those around him, wholly absorbed in the business, retaining his seat from the beginning to the end of the proceedings, and only satisfying the demands of appetite with the hard-boiled egg which he brought from home in his pocket, and which it was the special delight of the young wags, his rivals, slyly to abstract from its depository and substitute an unboiled one in its stead—an annoyance for which Woodfall never failed to certify his resentment by every demonstration which so silent and self-contained a man could make. The wonder is, now, how he managed, single-handed, to make head so long as he did against the decided superiority of the new system. But to say nothing of the reputation he had acquired, and which would not fail either him or his newspaper for many a day, it is plain that the system of the reliefs must have been imperfectly developed. It must have been so from the nature of the case, for the reporters had not then, nor for many years afterwards, a gallery to themselves, which they could enter or leave at their pleasure. They were indebted for their seat, like other strangers, to a member's order, and like other strangers they were treated; with them, as with

others, it was 'first come first served,' and an unlucky reporter who happened to be late might find the gallery filled, and his place lost for the evening, not for himself alone, but for all his comrades who had arranged to meet him. The great object of the reporters was to secure the centre seats in the front row of the gallery; and to obtain one of these cost a struggle every evening. On nights when a great debate was expected the first reporter for each paper would have to waste the whole day in the lobby, waiting till the gallery doors were opened, and then the rush for places commenced. It happened of course that they often lost the seats they aimed at, though by degrees, as time moved on, a sort of prescriptive right was established, and strangers visiting the gallery instinctively avoided what had come to be considered as the reporters' seats. But still the necessity for the reporters being among the first to take their seats could not be dispensed with; and long and dreary were the waitings to which they were subjected. This continued even down to a late period, and occasionally they got into trouble. One fiery little Welshman came down to take his turn, fresh from the festivities of St. David's Day. The House had met, but strangers were not admitted till after prayers. The Welshman, excited by his potations, began kicking at the unopened door, and startled the members at their devotions. The sergeant-at-arms came round and seized the offending reporter and he was lodged in the cellar. His companions sent an explanation of the circumstances to the Speaker, Mr. Manners Sutton, but at first he was disposed to treat the matter with more severity when he knew the offence had been committed by a reporter. However, he was willing to discharge him on his making an apology through the sergeant. But here a fresh obstacle occurred. The stubborn Welshman, in his then excited state, held that it was derogatory to his dignity to apologize to any man living, and the baffled sergeant was obliged to carry back to the Speaker the non-success

of his mission. But along with it he carried another missive from the other reporters, who did for their colleague what he refused to do for himself, and pleaded the licence of St. David's Day as his excuse. This the Speaker was good-natured enough to accept, the Welshman was released, and he gaily mounted the stairs to the gallery, calling out to his companions to bear witness that he had made no apology. Such were some of the difficulties connected with obtaining admission: the difficulty of getting out and giving place to another was quite as great. It was impossible that a reporter should leave his seat and cause confusion in the gallery when an orator was in the full flow of eloquence; he must wait till some halt occurred in the proceedings; and hence it would often happen that a reporter might be detained in his place for a full hour after he ought to have been relieved. It was provoking, too, that the more important the speech the longer he was likely to be engaged over his turn. Still, with all these disadvantages, as we are inclined to deem them, the system of reporting the debates by a succession of reliefs made way, and soon asserted its superiority over the single-handed style of Woodfall. That system could only have been a transitional one; it was not to be expected that Woodfall could have had a successor; and, besides, the growing demands for fulness, accuracy, and expedition, could not have been met by the reports as he produced them; but still the foundation of the modern style of reporting the debates must, in all fairness, be attributed to the practice of Memory Woodfall.

While the 'Morning Chronicle' was thus proceeding on its road to fame, the 'Morning Post' had started in the same career. It differed from the 'Chronicle' in this, that while the one owed its success mainly to the exertions, industry, and ability of its editor, Mr. Perry, the specialty of the other lay in calling forth the talents of young and then obscure men, many of whom afterwards became famous in their own generation, and whose memory is still green in

ours. The editor, whose discerning eye was thus quick to detect the dawnings of youthful genius, was also a Scotchman, Mr. Peter Stuart, who, with an elder brother, Charles, had come to London some years before, and embarked in the London press. Neither of them seem to have been remarkable for the ability of their own writings, but they seemed born with the idea that all the genius of the land was sent to be impressed into their service and to do them homage. Do our readers recollect the clever rhyming epistle of Burns to a gentleman who had sent him a newspaper and offered to continue it regularly without charge? That newspaper there is good reason to believe was sent to him by one of the brothers Stuart, and, further, that his offer contained more than a mere proposal to continue it. The story was first referred to by Dr. Currie in his life of Burns, prefixed to the first posthumous edition of his works. The biographer relates, somewhat in the tone of complaint, that an offer had been made to the poet, from the editor of a London newspaper, of an engagement by which he was to have a guinea a week for occasional contributions to the 'Star,' then just started, which happens to have been the first evening newspaper published. Dr. Currie's tone of complaint appears to have been caught from the family, and in all probability came originally from the poet himself, as if the offer were unworthy of his powers. At all events we know it was declined; and there is something abrupt and curt in the irony of the poem referred to, and in his sending back the newspaper, that bears out the suggestion that the poem accompanied the declination, and was meant definitely to close all correspondence between them. Yet it is difficult to understand on what ground the poet declined the offer. It could not have been from his dislike of newspapers, for we know that he deigned to correspond with newspapers, and with London newspapers too; a cutting comment on the sermon of a country clergyman, preached in a place of which nine-tenths of the cockneys of that day never heard, and addressed to the

London 'Oracle,' being still retained in the editions of his works. Nor could it have been because he thought the salary too small; it was shabby pay, no doubt; but Burns with all his cleverness never found out the modern secret of coining his genius into gold. In his eyes a bard could not be a bard unless he was poor; and, besides, the salary was more than equal to the annual sum paid him by the Government for his duties as an exciseman. It is probable that the suspicious and irritable temper of the poet led him to think that there was something degrading to his independence in having to write at the will and, in great measure, at the dictation of another. He preferred writing ballad after ballad as his own wayward fancy inspired him, and giving them away to Johnson for nothing, to be by him turned into a mine of wealth in which the poet had no share, to earning a modest competence by a few articles at regularly recurring seasons. Probably after all he took a more accurate measure of his powers than the sanguine editor. It is evident now that Burns never could have been brought to work in harness. And had the engagement issued, as it might easily have done, in removing him to London altogether, it would in all likelihood have prevented him from working at all. His genius was so essentially local, it was so thoroughly steeped in the scenery, habits, prejudices, traditions, and associations of his native land, that it would have pined in the, to him, unsuggestive localities of the sunny south. It might have been better for him and his, but it would have been worse for his country and for posterity. We should, in all probability, have lost the poet and got nothing in his place but a crude and turgid paragraph writer.

The Burns speculation failed in the hands of one Mr. Stuart. Another offer to a writer of wider powers but of the same wayward genius did not, in the end, turn out much better in the hands of another. It was through Daniel Stuart that Samuel Taylor Coleridge first became distinctly identified with the newspaper press. There are, indeed, indications that

he had written occasional articles before his connection with Stuart, for he refers in his *'Biographia Literaria'* to his supporting himself from that source at a date anterior to Stuart's engagement. If these are not slips of memory—with Coleridge no unusual thing—the articles are not now known, and we first come upon the track of his newspaper writing in connection with Stuart and in the columns of the *'Morning Post.'* That newspaper had been bought by Stuart in the year 1795, and Coleridge soon afterwards became an occasional contributor, but it was not till the year 1800 that he became a regular member of the staff. In those days the first department on which all men, whatever their powers, was tried was the Parliamentary gallery, and Coleridge was no exception to the general rule, though scarcely any man could have been more unfitted for the work. He has himself left on record a most amusing specimen of the way in which this part of his work was got over by him. Although its accuracy has been challenged in some of its details, there is little doubt that the main narrative was substantially true. On one occasion, when Pitt was expected to make a great speech, Coleridge was sent to report it. We have already described how the reporters in those days were jostled and even liable to be unseated by casual strangers; and to avoid that catastrophe Coleridge wended his way down to St. Stephen's and took up his position by nine o'clock in the morning, and waited patiently till the business of the evening began and Pitt commenced his harrangue. But the long hours, the want of proper food and exercise, and, in the end, the crush and steam of the crowded gallery and hall were too much for the wearied-powers of the genius, and after Pitt's opening sentences, and just as the orator was warming with his subject, Coleridge began to nod. The more eloquent the orator became the more drowsy waxed the imaginative reporter. He never exactly fell asleep, but continued, for as long as the speech lasted, in that painful, semi-conscious, torpid condition in which vigilance contends

with sleep, each assuming the mastery by turns, and ending in a drawn battle. But the speech thus imperfectly heard, still more imperfectly comprehended, and only noted down in fragments, was to be reported, and reported at once. Coleridge went home, scanned his notes, pieced them together in the best manner he could, and from disjointed fragments scattered up and down the pages of his notebook he set to work to reconstruct the speech much as a geologist would frame a mastodon from a few fossil fragments placed before him. Whatever else the speech might want we may be sure it was not lacking in ingenuity of argument, brilliancy of illustration, or finish of composition; and Coleridge closes his account of the adventure by stating that no less a personage than Mr. Canning, then the devoted adherent of Pitt, called the next day at the publishing office of the newspaper to ascertain the name of the reporter. The desired information was refused, to Coleridge's chagrin, when he came to know of the circumstance, and his pride as an author must have been gratified, however his vanity as a reporter might be snubbed, by the remark of the future prime minister, that the speech did more credit to the head than to the memory of the reporter. He was soon, however, transferred to a department more suited to his powers, as a political and literary writer for the paper. His own account of his engagement, the terms he made, and the principles on which he wrote, is conceived in quite a magniloquent vein. 'He made it a condition,' he says, 'that the paper should be thenceforward conducted on certain fixed and announced principles, and that he should neither be obliged nor requested to deviate from them in favour of any party or any event.' Hence the paper, which had hitherto supported Pitt, became somewhat anti-ministerial, while yet it did not go far enough to please the Opposition. As to the principles he laid down for his own guidance, he tells us, 'On every great occurrence I endeavoured to discover in past history the event that most nearly re-

JAMES PERRY,
OF "THE MORNING CHRONICLE"

sembled it. I procured, wherever it was possible, the contemporary historians, memorialists, and pamphleteers. Then fairly subtracting the points of difference from those of likeness, if the balance favoured the former or the latter, I conjectured that the result would be the same or different. In the series of essays entitled "A Comparison of France under Napoleon with Rome under the First Cæsars," and in those which followed, "On the Probable Final Restoration of the Bourbons," I feel myself authorised to affirm, by the effect produced on many intellectual men, that were the dates wanting it might have been suspected that the essays had been written within the last twelve months. The same plan I pursued at the commencement of the Spanish revolution, and with the same success, taking the war of the United Provinces with Philip II. as the groundwork of the comparison. Armed with the twofold knowledge of history and of the human mind, a man will scarcely err in his judgment concerning the sum total of any future national event, if he have been able to procure the original documents of the past together with authentic accounts of the present; and if he have a philosophic taste for what is truly important as facts, and in most instances, therefore, for such facts as the dignity of history has excluded from the volumes of our modern compilers by the writers of the age entitled historians.'

Perhaps so. We would not dispute for an instant the value of a judgment formed after such an examination by such a man. But in thus collecting the authentic facts of passing events, and in thus collating, sifting, straining off all that a mind with a philosophic taste judges to be truly valuable in ancient historians, memorialists, pamphleteers, what becomes of the exigencies of a daily newspaper? And to come to the case more directly in hand, in all this dictation of what the newspaper was to be, and the principles on which it was to be conducted, what place is there left for the general editor and, indeed, the proprietor, Mr. Daniel Stuart? It is not to be wondered at that he should have

felt annoyed at being thus quietly pushed out of sight. It appears, however, that it was not so much the ignoring of his existence as his being dragged forward in an invidious light that moved this gentleman to stand on his own defence. Were it given forth to the world that he was a cipher in his own establishment it might have been borne, but when Mr. Coleridge went on to say, as he did, that by those appliances, so grandly described, he raised the circulation of the 'Post' to seven thousand a day, while the remuneration he received from Stuart was hardly sufficient to maintain existence, it was not in human nature to be longer silent. A series of letters was published by him, in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for 1838, in his own defence, and making retaliatory charges against Coleridge, which again were replied to, in a rather acrimonious manner, by the poet's son, in the pages of the same magazine, and for the same year. With the controversy, considered as a controversy, we do not propose to interfere, but the correspondence brings out some features of newspaper life which are worth extracting. We have seen Coleridge's theory of newspaper writing, as illustrated by his own practice. Let us have a peep at the other side of the picture, and see that practice as reported by the less flattering pen of Mr. Stuart. 'Having arranged with him,' says the editor, 'the matter of a leading paragraph one day, I went about six o'clock for it. I found him stretched on the sofa groaning with pain. He had not written a word, nor could he write. The subject was one of a temporary, unimportant, and a pressing nature. I returned to the 'Morning Post' office, wrote it out myself, and then I went to Coleridge, at Howell's, read it over, begged he would correct it, and decorate it a little with some of his graceful touches. When I had done reading he exclaimed, "Me correct that? It is as well written as I or any other man could write it." And so I was obliged to content myself with my own works.' It is right to add that Mr. Stuart does full justice to Coleridge's powers, and only regrets that they

were so seldom exercised in the paper on which he was engaged. He denies, however, that his writings raised the circulation of the paper to the extent Coleridge represents it. His appearances in its columns were too fitful and intermittent for that. The best things he wrote in its columns were the 'Devil's Walk' and the 'Character of Pitt.' This last made a great sensation, and was read with delight and profit. A character of Buonaparte by the same hand was announced, but it never made its appearance. 'Often,' says Mr. Stuart, 'was he asked for its publication, but he never could persuade Coleridge to finish his undertaking.'

It will be inferred from the extracts we have given, that the brilliant writer and the matter-of-fact editor did not always draw well together. In truth, it is only necessary for the reader to place himself alternately in that point of view in which each of the parties wrote, and he will see that there is no real contradiction between them. Coleridge and Coleridge's friends thought much of the profoundly original essay, full charged with weighty truths, and glittering with the coruscations of a fancy as brilliant and as changeful as the kaleidoscope. The editor no doubt admired them too—when they came. But what availed the richest gifts and capabilities, if these were only fitfully exercised? It was a just subject of pride for Coleridge, and one on which he might well be pardoned for dilating, that Fox had once done him the honour of denouncing him in the House of Commons as having caused, by his articles in the 'Morning Post,' the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. But Mr. Stuart was thinking of the frequent irritating disappointments he must have had, when waiting till midnight for the often-promised 'copy' of the leading article, he found that he must not depend on his gifted but most capricious coadjutor, and tired, chagrined, angry, and all unprepared, he must sit down to write it himself. These are the trials of the editor of a daily newspaper, and no fine writing will in his eyes excuse

unpunctuality. We have only to think, indeed, of the precision, pitiless as the stroke of destiny, with which a morning newspaper must be brought out, how many subordinate agencies are at work to produce that wondrous sheet, and how easily the failure of one single agent might throw the whole into disorder, to understand how, in the eyes of a newspaper editor, the virtue which stands highest, — higher than intellect, higher than brilliancy, higher even than genius itself,—is punctuality. It was this that induced a gentleman who we believe is now the oldest, and certainly not the least successful of London editors, to say to a new aspirant for a place on his staff: 'I have a horror of clever men. A sensible, sound-headed man may now and then be dull, but I can depend upon his doing what is to be done; while a clever man is almost always an erratic man, and you never know when you have him.' Now this uncertainty was, no doubt, Coleridge's great crime in Stuart's eyes; and though we, who can peruse at our leisure the pregnant papers he wrote under that engagement, may well accord to them our admiration, yet we ought not altogether to refuse our sympathy to the irascible, fiery, and sorely-tried editor, who had the pabulum of each returning day to provide, and whose irritation must naturally have increased with each returning disappointment.

Coleridge was not the only writer that Stuart contrived to secure for his papers who has since left a name behind him. Sir James Mackintosh, who had come up, like Perry before him, from the College of Aberdeen, to push his fortune in London, found employment for some time in writing for the newspapers; and having subsequently married the sister of Mr. Stuart, he was at one time a regular writer for that gentleman. It must be noted here, however, that Stuart had two newspapers: the 'Post' in the morning, and the 'Courier' in the evening, and that he personally superintended both. Southey never, we believe, engaged in newspaper work on his own account; but he frequently wrote for

his brother-in-law, Coleridge, which probably contributed to keep up Coleridge's connection with Stuart longer than would otherwise have been the case. But of all the authors of that period, the one whose connection with newspaper life we would have thought to be the least likely was Charles Lamb. It would hardly have been believed, had he not himself assured us of the fact; having devoted one of his later essays to his recollections of a newspaper life thirty-five years before; and very queer recollections they are. Lamb, of course, knew nothing of politics, and Stuart knew nothing of any matter but politics. Had he had an eye in his head, he could hardly have failed to recognise in the little shy, nervous, shrinking, pale-faced man before him a mine of wealth, who could give to his paper a distinctiveness and a specialty that would have distanced all competitors. What he actually thought of him he has left on record. 'As for good Charles Lamb, I never could make anything of his writings. Coleridge often and repeatedly pressed me to settle him on a salary, and often and repeatedly did I try; but it would not do. Of politics he knew nothing: they were not of his line of reading and thought — and the drollery was vapid when given in short paragraphs fit for a newspaper.' Why the 'drollery,' as Mr. Stuart chooses to call that delicious and subtle, yet genial, flow of fancy which characterises all Lamb's writings was necessary to be compressed into short paragraphs, in order to render it fit for a newspaper, we are not informed. Perry was not of that opinion when, years afterwards, he opened the columns of his evening paper to a series of sketches by a young man, then a reporter on his staff, who subsequently, and first of all by these very sketches, rose to fame, and whose name, whether as 'Boz' or Charles Dickens, is now mentioned as a household word wherever the English language is spoken. It seems, however, to have been the fashion at that time, before the advent of 'Punch,' who is now regarded as a regular quarry from which jokes

may be extracted by most of our provincial newspapers, that each London paper should keep a joker of its own. 'In those days,' says Lamb, 'every morning paper, as an essential retainer to its establishment, kept an author who was bound to furnish daily a quantum of witty paragraphs. Sixpence a joke—and it was thought pretty high too—was Dan Stuart's settled remuneration in these cases. The chat of the day, scandal, and, above all, dress, furnished the material. The length of no paragraph was to exceed seven lines. Shorter they might be, but they must be poignant.' That was the situation which Lamb held on Stuart's paper, and how he groaned under it he also tells us. 'No Egyptian taskmaster ever devised a slavery like to that of our slavery. No fractious operants ever turned out for half the tyranny which this necessity exercised upon us. Half a dozen jests in a day (bating Sundays too), why, it seems nothing! We make twice the number every day in our lives, as a matter of course, and claim no sabbatical exemptions. But then they come into our head. But when the head has to go out to them—when the mountain must go to Mahomet—reader, try it for me only one short twelve-month.'

We might copy the whole essay, but that the majority of our readers probably have it already by heart; yet, for the benefit of the unhappy few, or rather those happy ones, to whom Lamb is yet an unknown luxury—who have yet to taste him for the first time, with those emotions he has so quaintly depicted in his 'Essay on Roast Pig,'—we must give his account of a brother joker of his. One 'Bob Allen, our quondam schoolfellow, was tapping his impracticable brains in a like service for the "Oracle." Not that Robert troubled himself much about wit. If his paragraphs had a sprightly air about them, it was sufficient. He carried this nonchalance so far at last, that a matter of intelligence, and that no very important one, was not seldom palmed upon his employers for a good jest; for example's sake:—"Walking, yes-

terday morning, casually down Snow Hill, who should we meet but Mr. Deputy Humphreys. We rejoice to add that the worthy deputy appeared to enjoy a good state of health. We do not ever remember to have seen him look better." He had better have met anything that morning than a Common Councilman. His services were shortly afterwards dispensed with, on the plea that his paragraphs of late had been deficient in point. . . . We traced our friend's pen afterwards in the "True Briton," the "Star," the "Traveller"—from all which he was successively dismissed, the proprietors having no further occasion for his services. Nothing was easier than to detect him. When wit failed, or topics were low, there constantly appeared the following:—"It is not generally known that the three blue balls at the pawn-brokers' shops are the ancient arms of Lombardy. The Lombards were the first money-brokers in Europe." Bob has done more to set the public right on this important point of blazonry than the whole College of Heralds.' Lamb's account of his separation from the 'Morning Post,' by the way, somewhat differs from Stuart's version. He represents himself as transferred to another paper (which soon after expired), by a change in the proprietors; but it is quite possible that the loose off-and-on sort of connection which he had with Stuart may have thrown his memory somewhat at fault. It cannot be that he had any wish to conceal anything that tended to his own disadvantage; for Stuart himself does not speak with more disrespect of his lucubrations than this gentle, kindly, and most modest of men does of them himself.

In closing this paper, it is instructive to mark the number of men, afterwards eminent in letters or in practical life, who began their career by writing in a newspaper. And yet we believe, with scarcely an exception, the biographers of these men affect to think that their talents were wasted in that occupation, and lament that so much time and industry as they displayed had not been devoted to more congenial work. The

truth we believe to have been exactly the other way. Many of these would never have been authors at all, if their immature powers had not first been braced and disciplined in the columns of a newspaper; and in every case the remuneration thus obtained proved a valuable resource to them, while they were slowly and in silence laying the foundations of their future fame. We are, no doubt, pointed to men, of some of whom we have given slight notices in the present sketch, and we shall meet more hereafter, who have been early initiated into newspaper life, become so bound up in the system, allowed their minds to run so continuously in that level groove, that they never emerged from it, but spent their undoubtedly great powers in compositions which were produced for the day, and deservedly died with the day. But, examining closely the character of these men, we shall find that the secret of their failure lay not in the nature of their work, but in themselves; and the probability is that such men, if there had been no newspapers on which to employ their powers, would have remained equally obscure, without the merit of having been equally useful. There is no instance of a man of original, inventive, and eagerly active powers being prevented by his connection with newspapers from distinguishing himself in any department of literature to which he wished to turn his attention. We might go farther, and say that there is no other profession which supplies more facilities for study and incentives to research. It has its dangers, no doubt: its besetting temptation is the tendency to lose one's self in the multiplicity of those subjects of interest which daily appeal to him; but, keeping those tendencies under control, the newspaper writer has time enough at his command to devote to his favourite object of study, while his professional avocations keep his intellect bright and keen, and effectually check any disposition to stagnate and vegetate amid a collection of books. It would be difficult to overestimate the advantages which newspaper writing has opened up for persons who, without any great in-

tallectual power, are blessed with literary tastes. It has given them a place and a profession in the world, and, considered merely in a pecuniary point of view, it has yielded them a remuneration which they might not have gained in any other avocation—certainly in none so congenial to their tastes. And it affords a vantage-ground from which any man may, and from time to time

many men do, emerge into fame. It is ungrateful, to say the least of it, for literary men or their friends to abuse a profession which gave them the opportunity to make their first venture into the world of letters, and which, if that venture should prove a failure, stands ready with its friendly aid to break their fall, and receive them again into its ranks.

A FIRST ATTEMPT;

OR, 'EVERY ONE HAS A BIT OF ROMANCE.'

A CURIOUS history is that of my first attempt at a final settlement, matrimonially speaking, in this life. But when I say *first attempt*, I by no means would assert that earlier days had not been witnesses of youthful follies. I have it on credible grounds, nay more, I believe it is extant both in family legends, traditions, and records, that I was engaged—for life, of course, until death do us, &c.—at the very immature age of *ten*, to a young lady of similar years; what they were exactly, I dare hardly say, seeing that at this time of life the heart, void of discrimination, adores young ladies of whatever age they may be. But that, in this instance, the ages in question were more on a par, may be gathered from the fact that the young lady still blooms, young and fair as the blush rose; but this by the way. Then, too, I must not omit to mention the various desperate declarations made at the salad age of sixteen; when I distinctly remember accompanying a young lady to our gate, and bidding her an adieu that would most decidedly, a few years later, have brought odious brothers, with polite interrogations as to 'intentions;' or, worse even than that, would have indulged the public in general with a hearty laugh at my remarks, messages, &c., of the kind usually dealt out by stony-hearted counsel, solely for their amusement, and for no possible end of justice, in that remnant of the Inquisition—a trial for breach of promise of marriage.

No. When I say my First Attempt, I mean more than all this. As the soft zephyr, toying with the whispering foliage, to the hurricane, hurrying everything in its mad wrath before it; as the babbling stream, scarce making sweet music o'er the pebbles in the brook, to the boisterous sea, tearing up the rocks and the tight-clinging seaweed, and dashing them on the shore. Such these very phantoms of love, brief glimpses, and types of what was to come, to the stern and ardent reality. Man cannot go on trifling for ever. 'Perpetual droppings wear away a stone.' It must come at last; for 'every dog has his day.' And though the minor premiss—that every man is a dog—does not equally hold true; yet we may draw the conclusion that every man has his day. At least, if he does not, he is beyond me; he is superhuman. Not for him do I recount tales of past (past, alas!) loves.

'IMI robur et aes triplex,
Circum pectus erat;'

(which, for the benefit of our fairer readers, I might translate, 'He had no small amount of brass'). Who can say he has not loved? Let us pass him by, consoling ourselves with that most comforting doctrine—

'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.'

I was at O—f—d; the possessor of many friends. Free as the bird we had all been term after term; till 'a change came o'er the spirit

of their dream.' I noticed among them a restlessness, a disappearance for whole days, a returning late at night, an increased amount of correspondence. What could this portend? I could make nothing of it. Such secrets men divulge not but in a *very* weak moment. That moment, however, came. A lunch was given to celebrate some event; and I was bidden to the feast. Ladies, a great rarity in dingy college rooms, graced the board. Here was the secret out. They were engaged. Their fair fiancées, chaperoned by one of those heaven-sent windfalls, a young (and not *strict*) married lady, had honoured their swains with their presence, under one phase of their bachelor life. Ever anxious to do a friend a good turn, and no doubt wishing to entangle one yet free as closely in the meshes as themselves, they had asked me to 'meet' the ladies, married, single, and engaged, in hopes a stray shot might perchance bring me down. My day was come.

'Mr. Nelson'—'Miss Fanny Hestrie.' Bow, and so on. After lunch to our chapel—one of the lions of the place, and, consequently, duly admired. Then for a walk.

Oh, ye Christ Church meadows! and ye elms rugged with age! what tales of courtship could ye not relate had ye but tongues? From which apostrophe may be gathered that we took that direction for our walk. Being just an even number, Miss Fanny fell to my lot. Well, first walks are by no means interesting, either to narrator or audience. I will merely say that before the aforesaid walk terminated a very fair footing of acquaintance was established: and a general invitation given to the father's house, some dozen miles off.

What are a dozen miles to the young lover? What are fifty miles in these railway days? But rail was far too *slow*, intrinsically speaking; so dog-carts are chartered; and the first day possible a cavalcade set out. The 'bay mare' whirls along a light cart, bearing two ardent lovers; a more ponderous machine, devoid of name, submits, though unwillingly, to be dragged

slowly after by two ponies. In this machine were the new aspirants. We arrived, and *found* Mr. Hestrie, to use a curious but common expression, *out*. Still there were the young ladies; what more could we wish? and we made the most of our opportunity.

That evening a small accident that happened to the machine, and delayed us about half an hour, settled my fate, as I thought, irretrievably, for life. The animals on starting had indulged in certain freaks peculiar to O—f—d productions, and the pole had broken. Mr. Hestrie kindly offered us his carriage, and we returned into the house till such time as it should be got ready. We all, accidentally, divided into couples, Fanny and I falling, as it were, naturally, to one another's lot. To be brief; it was not long before we made up our minds that we should do very well for one another. This was precipitate—very; and worse, it was imprudent. During the whole evening I had neglected to secure the good opinion of the father. I had indeed made no effort to do so; and the want of this proved the want of one card to support the house I afterwards built, and which afterwards so suddenly collapsed. Here, then, I point a moral, if I do not adorn a tale; let enthusiastic young men remember never to lose an opportunity—particularly the *first*—of securing the good wishes and opinion of the parent. This is no new text on which to preach; but how often is this neglected; how often is total annihilation the result of want of forethought!

But to proceed. I left that night the happiest of men. Perverse, wayward, she was; yet who so likely to succeed where others had failed, as I? I saw her faults, and believed myself the identical person to cure them. With this end in view I went through all the troubles incidental to an admirer naturally jealous; but determined to undergo everything for the end—the final happiness of making her mine, and moulding her wayward character to a gentler form.

There was a friend who was also brought over with us; for the very

purpose, as it seemed, of keeping me on the *qui vive*, and introducing to my favourable notice the little artifices women have for the torment of their especial admirers. Having looked calmly and æsthetically back, with the sole purpose of consoling my wounded spirits, I have evolved the theory, that a woman who torments is primarily not really fond of the tormentee; nor, secondarily, is she worthy of his enduring such torment. This to the jealous. A wholesome doctrine indeed, if it could be applied during the suffering; but, nevertheless, not without comfort when the business is over, and one begins really to congratulate oneself on being well out of it. To return to my friend, the medium of torment applied. The medium defeated the object of the agent. For who, mentally conscious at least of his own security, could possibly believe that a man who, on the nicest things being said to him, said 'Haw!' and stroked his downy chin, as though sole assignee of this quality of goods; or, less practically speaking, the only person in the room who had any right to such remarks; who, I say, could believe such an one a *rival*? I steadfastly deny I was jealous. I may have appeared so; but I was not. Still, if the medium were inclined to divulge certain lectures I gave him privately and for his sole use and emolument, he might—I don't say justifiably—say I was jealous. But I deny it *in toto*.

Thus I kept 'the noiseless tenor of my way' for some happy weeks; but 'coming events cast their shadows before.' Miss Fanny became more fitful in her acceptance or non-acceptance of my attentions. Circumstances *had* occurred—mind, I do not say what. I *had* done things imprudent, foolish, precipitate. But was it my fault? Is it the fault of the ship caught in the strong ocean current, hurried rapidly to its own destruction, that it cannot stay its headlong course, and once more ride in safety o'er the deep? No, it is not; and I defy any one to say that what occurred shortly, was due solely to my imprudence.

I was going to settle the matter one way or another. I was saved the trouble. I was going to screw my courage to the sticking-point. What is courage against woman? I was going to drink one extra glass of wine, go straight to her father, and say—stay, I had not made up my mind what to say. But thus it was.

To say the scene is stamped on my mind in burning outlines, is to use a very stale and not altogether probable metaphor. We were going to dinner, that is, people were coming down to dinner; you see I am so confused that I do not know how it was. It was, at any rate, before dinner; I was in the drawing-room alone, waiting for Fanny. One of the girls told me she would see me. I knew something was coming. I was afraid—I honestly confess I was afraid—I was in a mess. She came; no one else in the room. She went straight to the mantelpiece, and stood there. She had a white muslin trimmed with black—for she was in mourning for an aunt—an aunt who had left her money; an aunt whose memory I had hitherto greatly revered; but who from this day was to be to me as though she had not lived. Fanny, leaning her elbows on the cold marble, her flushed face strangely contrasting with the paleness of the surrounding objects, made use of a few very remarkable words—words so few, and so remarkable, that there was no questioning their meaning, though more hidden than expressed.

'Mr. Nelson,' she said, 'your attentions are too conspicuous!'

My attentions too conspicuous! of course they were. What had meant that daily chaff from sisters and from friends? What that cold gray eye of paternity (for mother she had not) fixed on me when he asked me to have some more fish?

Farewell, thought I, a long farewell to all my greatness. 'Let us part friends,' said I. (People always *do* say that when rejected.)

'We do,' she said; and the door opened, and the rest entered, and this was the last time I saw her alone.

Of course I enjoyed my dinner—

one always does—and of course I got twitted for my taciturnity. As if one could laugh and joke when one had just been told one's attentions were too conspicuous. Ah! ha! I laugh now; I joke now; but then it was horrible—it was excru-

ciating. I enjoyed my ride home! I enjoyed next day's thoughts! I enjoy now telling the tale! I have never seen the girl from that day to this. *Tant pis!* I am happy. *Tant mieux!*

N.

LORD CLYDE OF CLYDESDALE.

SILENT was the battle-slogan,
On no stricken field he fell;
England's clasping arms were round him,
Warrior whom she trusted well.
Yet our thoughts are all of conflict
As beside that grave we mourn,
For his name was hung with trophies
From a thousand foemen torn.

Fast are memories thronging o'er us
Of the grand old fields of Spain,
How he faced the charge of Junot
And the fight where Moore was slain.
Oh! the years of weary waiting
For the glorious chance he sought,
For the slowly ripening harvest
That life's latest autumn brought.

Tardy laurels! yet he grasped them
With a bold and steadfast hand,
When we fought the swarthy swordsmen
From the river-sundered land.*
And the lightning of his onset
Pierced the Scythians' stubborn lines,
When a new and fearful purple
Flushed o'er Alma's tangled vines.

There is many a Russian mother,
There is many a Tartar maid,
Weeps the day when Balaklava
Saw Sir Colin's red brigade.
Yet in triumph's day they passed him
Till there came a night of grief,
And then England, in her anguish,
Sought the old and slighted Chief.

And from Ganges' banks to Indus
Swept the legions that he led,
And the torn and trampled lotus†
Marked their stern avenging tread.
Lay him there where Outram slumbers,
Let him sleep by Canning's side;
Death has joined the great triumvirs,
And has sheathed the sword of Clyde.

KING SMITH.

* The Punjab.

† The lotus, as is well known, was used as a sort of symbol by the Sepoy mutineers. Cakes stamped with this emblem were circulated just before the great insurrection in 1857.

Drawn by William McConnell.

THE ACTORS' FETE.

THE ACTORS' FETE.

THE rising generation ought to be thankful for its high privileges. It is born to the perfection of steam power, the electric telegraph, photography, and all those wonderful arts and sciences which were not even dreamt of fifty years ago. What a privilege to have one's birth announced to interested friends by electric telegraph! to go to school every morning by rail! to be photographed when a baby in long clothes! and last, but not least, to be admitted for the small charge of half a crown to see and hold converse with actors and actresses in the clothes of everyday life! There is a treat for a youngster rising sixteen! Yet that youngster rising sixteen whom I escorted through the Crystal Palace on Saturday, the 25th July, did not seem to think much of it. I fancy, on the whole, the Bath buns at the refreshment stalls had more attraction for him than the leading low comedian in the black surtout, or even the fascinating danseuse in the pork-pie hat, kissing strawberries, and disposing of them for half a crown apiece. This is what it is to be in one's teens in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Your young man of one-and-twenty is as wise as Solomon, and as thoroughly used up. When he retires from the festivities attendant upon his coming of age, he is ready to exclaim, 'All is vanity.' He has had no wishes, no desires, no longings which have not been gratified almost as soon as they were formed.

Well, I don't envy the rising generation in this respect. Hope has its pleasures, even when deferred; and desires postponed increase respect for the object of them. What does the copy-slip say? 'Familiarity breeds contempt.' Hark to the youth rising sixteen—

'Hallo! there's old Paul Bedford.'

Irreverent youth! *Old Paul Bedford* indeed! When I was the age of that youth, did I not haunt the

stage door of the Adelphi night after night to see Mr. Paul Bedford pass out? *Mister Paul Bedford*, mind you, not 'old Paul Bedford.' Did I not, as I have said, haunt that stage door for nights, and walk Maiden Lane at ghost hour on Saturdays, in the hope of seeing the illustrious Paul in the guise of the real world? At last, after many disappointments, after long and patient vigils under the lamp-post, occasionally in the rain, I cast eyes upon him. I felt that I was in the presence of a superior being. I followed him at a respectful distance with awe and reverence. I met a friend, a youth like myself, and was proud to point out the great man to him. 'Do you know who that is?' 'No.' 'That's Mr. Paul Bedford.' 'Is it?' I shall never forget the eager interest expressed in that 'Is it?' My youthful friend ran forward and looked up in the great man's face. He came back presently awfully impressed, and said, 'It is!'

I was happy for years in my knowledge of the private personal appearance of Mr. Paul Bedford, and in being able to point him out to my friends; I acquired a sort of theatrical reputation from this fact. I was a person who knew Mr. Paul Bedford—when I saw him in the street. I remember, in my eagerness for that happy future, which came after many days, boasting mendaciously that I knew Mr. Paul Bedford *personally*. I didn't. I had never heard him speak a word except on the stage. What I would have given to have been introduced to him then. To have shaken him by the great hand; to have heard him say, in his private capacity, as a member of the public, a householder, a father of a family and a social being—'I believe you, my boy.'

But in *my* young days, honours like this were only to be attained by patience and work. I had to qualify myself for personal acquaintance with Mr. Paul Bedford, by learning

the art of a dramatic author. How much leather does an apprentice spoil before he learns to make a good pair of shoes! How much paper does an author spoil—how often are his manuscripts thrown into the waste-paper basket, or left for him at the stage door—before he learns to write an actable piece. So long did I wait—not patiently—for the great honour. At length one bright day I found myself in a delirium of nervous delight, seated in the green room reading a farce, and there was the immortal Paul beside me, listening with all the submissiveness of an infant scholar. When it was all over, he gave me the great hand to shake; he offered me snuff from a silver box; and I learned in the course of the afternoon that he had spoken of me with high respect. I had reached the summit of my ambition at last. Ah, what bliss! The rising generation can never know such bliss, for now-a-days the payment of half a crown 'admits' to the whole arcana of theatrical life: and as the copy-slip says, 'Familiarity,' &c.

Here we are then once more in the great transept of the Crystal Palace, purchasing pincushions from pretty actresses, in the cause of charity. What a privilege to be able to stand in the midst here, by Messrs. Toole and Bedford's peep-show, and devour all the pretty actresses in London 'at a glance!' Ah, surely this is the *embarras de richesses*! Here is Miss Lydia Thompson on one side and Miss Latimer on the other. Miss Lydia does not kiss cigars and sell the shoes off her feet this time, having, since last fair day, entered into the sober state of matrimony. Is it to Lydia that the leading-article writer in the 'Dramatic College News' refers, when he informs us as follows?—'Charmed by her appearance and manners, a visitor to the last Fancy Fair offered her his hand and heart, and she is now the happy wife of a cheerful and wealthy gentleman.' Just such a treasure did Lydia deserve. Wealth and cheerfulness! What richer gifts could a husband possess? Only I would suggest that the wealthy and

cheerful gentleman should in future remain at home. His presence in the stall facetiously proposing to charge the public so much per head for a sight of his wife was not in the best taste, nor was it conducive to the interest of the charity. The same remark will apply to other gentlemen who made themselves officiously busy in helping ladies who would have got on much better without them. And while I am finding fault, let me add a word of reproof to certain giddy young ladies who left their stalls and ran about the transept importuning gentlemen to buy, after the manner of the ragged urchins whose fancy fair is held in the streets, and whose merchandise is fuzees. These giddy things would do well to take a lesson from the dignified, yet none the less attractive, commercial manner of Mrs. Stirling, Mrs. Alfred Mellon, Mrs. Howard Paul, Miss Bufton, and Miss Saunders. It was most gratifying to observe that the old favourites obtained the largest share of patronage. There was no getting even a glimpse of Mrs. Mellon, Mrs. Paul, or Mrs. Stirling, for the eager crowds which thronged round them all day long, to pay homage to their worth no less than to their talent. I sadly wanted a slice of the Prince of Wales's wedding cake, and was prepared to give a crown-piece for it, if I could only have got near enough to negotiate the matter with Mrs. Paul herself. Why did not Mr. Howard Paul stand in front with a whip, and drive away the boys 'as hadn't got no money, and kept away them as had?' It strikes me that a good many of the boys (and girls) who crowded to the front did nothing but listen to the music (of Mrs. Paul's voice) and look at the pictures outside. And there was I with many more waiting to 'walk up' and pay my money. As to Mrs. Mellon, with whom I have been in love ever since I met her among the flying Indians, I never once caught a glimpse of her, all owing to a great big black-whiskered man who walked about her stall, and got in her way and mine too. Confound the man! why did he not go and act a kangaroo,

or some other kind of wild beast in Mr. Joe Robins's menagerie? I did, by a vicarious process, become the happy possessor of one of Mrs. Stirling's cigars. It could not have been a worse one; but I would have smoked a dozen such for *her* sake. Bless me! to think that she, before whom I had so often sat, spellbound, in the front row of the pit, should ever condescend to sell me a cigar—and a bad one too! I shall keep the end of that cigar among my treasures.

Articles of little or no value, of all kinds, selling for their weight in silver—smiles and winning glances, and soft persuasive words thrown in to turn the scale—amber mouthpieces, braces, cigars, dolls, eau de Cologne, fuzess, gloves, honey soap, inkbottles, Jews' harps, knitting needles, laces, muffetees, note paper, opera glasses, penknives, quills, rosewater, shells, tapers, urns, vases, wax—every trifle that you can give a name to, including such curiosities as water from Jordan, sold by Mrs. Howard Paul in drops, 'including a shake of a mummy's hand for sixpence extra.' Who shall say that these ladies—when they behave themselves as such—are lowering the dignity of their profession? Do not duchesses and countesses do the same thing in the cause of charity? And I have not heard that the lustre of the peerage has been dimmed in consequence.

On the whole, this fête offered many attractions which were wanting on previous occasions. The shows were all of a superior kind, and if the visitors were occasionally 'sold,' they had the consolation of being 'sold' in an agreeable and entertaining manner. The people in the transept were at first rather shy of paying sixpence to look into Mr. Toole's peep-show, remembering that last year there was nothing to see but a display of fireworks represented by a shower of brown paper. On this occasion, however, the show contained a series of grotesque illustrations of the drama of 'Black-eyed Susan,' drawn with exquisite humour by Mr. William McConnell. And was not Mr. Toole's description of the drama

worth all the money? Owing to the libretto—the joint composition of two contributors to 'London Society'—having been sent in late—the night before in fact—Mr. Toole was obliged to stick the MS. up against the side of the show, and 'wing it.' While the proprietors were not looking, I had an opportunity of copying the greater part of the composition into my notebook, and at the risk of bringing down an injunction on the head of the Editor of this Magazine, I hereby publish the same.

'Here you see the real, horiginal, sentimental, nautical mellydrammer of "Black-eyed Susan; or, The Lass as loved a Sailor." "All in the Downs the fleet was moored." On the right you will hobserve the Downs with the British fleet a-layin' at hanchor. On the left you perceive Black-eyed Susan agoing aboard the "Sarcy Harethusa," for to hask the jovial sailors to tell her terew, if her sweet Villiam is a-sailing among their carew. Hobserve Villiam a-waving of his 'at on the maintop-gallant mast with vun 'and, and a-splicin' of the main-brace with the hother. He sees the lovely Susan, and quick as lightning he slides down the rope, hutterly regardless of the skin of his 'ands and the knees 'of his trousers, which you will hobserve have been carefully mended by the lovely but industrious Susan. (*Change.*)

'Here you see the British tars a-carousin' hafter a long voyage, on sangwidges made with five-pun Bank of England notes, and a-frying of their watches in the werry best fourteenpenny Dorset butter—a pictur' of Hengland's greatness on the hoocean. (*Change.*)

'Here you see Villiam and Susan a-parting at Vapping Hold Stairs, and Susan a-giving Villiam a 'bacca-box marked with her name, vich she engraved her own self with her darning needle. (*Change.*)

'Here you see Black-eyed Susan a-goin' in a cherry-coloured gownd and hopen-vork stockings, to meet Villiam. You will hobserve her putting up her humbrellar, which purvents her from seein' a willin as is coming round the corner in

a cocked hat and a cutlash. On the left you observe the wicked captain of the vessel where William has served king and country, where the stormy winds do blow in the Bay of Biscay oh—vich it was always William's motto, "England expects that every man this day will do his dooty." (*Change.*) Here you see—' But at this point the performance was suspended, Messrs. Toole and Bedford being summoned to give their services in another part of the fair. I am assured, however, that everything came all right in the end, as in all stage life it properly ought to do.

One of the 'novelties,' and perhaps the funniest thing in the fair, was Wombwell's menagerie. The wonderful pictures of Bengal tigers and boa constrictors outside, though admirably painted, were not, as is usually the case, the 'best part of it.' Who will ever forget Mr. Addison's make-up in that green velveteen coat, as showman. Did he not seem to the manner born? A compliment to the artist rather than to the man. But candidly, now, I ask you, could you see Sir Peter Teazle under that green velveteen? And Mr. Joe Robins, in his fleshings and bear-skin mantle, as Van Amburgh. I have seen Van Amburgh, and I have seen Joe Robins; and I say, give me Joe Robins. The statue of Hercules in the Roman Court was a monument of attenuation in comparison. And the wild beasts! To witness their gambols was quite a new sensation, for with all the ordinary attributes of wild beasts, including manginess, they were comic and exceedingly absurd, which was entirely owing to the fact that they were represented by the superior animal, Man. I was about to indulge in some philosophical reflections upon certain points of inferiority in the intellectual animal as compared with the brutes, when I was interrupted by Mr. Addison, requesting me to join in a cheer for the encouragement of those outside, and then to take myself off as quickly as possible.

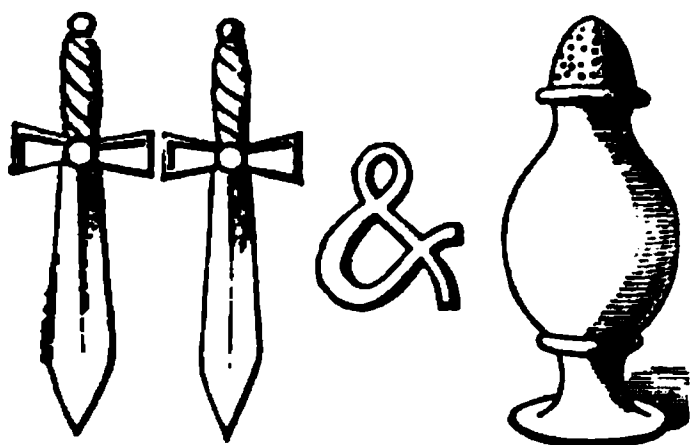
Messrs. Toole and Bedford, as usual, appeared to have the faculty

of Sir Boyle Roche's bird. They were here, there, and everywhere at once. When they had made William and Susan happy for the fiftieth time, they rushed off to the Richardsonian Theatre, where they enacted *Barbadzulo*, *Vangloroso*, and *Lagrimosa Cura*, respectively the villain, and the interesting heroine (Mr. Paul Bedford), of the thrilling drama of the 'Demon of the Castle Heights.' I suspect that Cirujano M. M.C., the author of the piece, must have been, like your two contributors, late with his 'copy,' for the dialogue and music seemed to be improvised as the piece went on. Thus Mr. Toole would say, 'The deed is done. 'Tis well.' To the music of Isaacson (the leader of the orchestra). 'I say again, the deed is done; 'tis well (chord in orchestra). But never mind, he shall not escape my vengeance; no, never (chord). And yet 'tis hard to have to return to my native village and murder my own father (chord). But it must be done, for he is rich and I am short' (chord and exit). Mr. Toole is an actor of marvellous resource, and is never at a loss for a joke or some apt device which serves the same purpose, still I think it would be well if the Richardsonian drama constituting, as it does, the chief attraction of the fair, were designed with a little more intention and method. Fooling is none the worse for having some point and direction.

It is but one step from the 'parade' of the Richardsonian Theatre to the portals of the Pauly-Tooley-technic Institution; but ere I can take that step and pay my money at the door, Messrs. Toole and Bedford have doffed their mediæval garments, and lo, here they are in professional suits of black, lecturing upon astronomy and the use of the crystal globes. In accordance with the practice of other famous institutes established for the information and enlightenment of the people, the Pauly-Tooley-technic seasoned science with sensation; and, after the heavenly bodies had been disposed of, we were treated to a sight of the 'Bearded Giantess of Corsica,' eight

feet high in her stockings, and sister to the celebrated brothers Louis and Fabien; also a New Zealand chief, who illustrated the peculiar nature of the laws of gravitation at the antipodes by standing on his head. We were informed that the chief had a great appetite for coppers, and could eat any quantity of them without injury to his digestion. The company accordingly subscribed a hatful, but the chief, on discovering a sixpence among them, declared that it quite took away his appetite. Though extremely fond of copper, the sight of silver always made him ill. He would nevertheless 'keep the lot,' as there were several members of his tribe who liked silver as well as copper, and had no great aversion even to gold.

The ghost! the ghost! the ghost! Professors Toole and Bedford promised not only to produce the ghost, but also to show us 'how the thing was done.' Of course we were all anxious. We had sat at the Adelphi and wondered until our heads ached. But now the secret was to be divulged. The mystery was to be revealed. We stood in breathless expectation as Mr. Toole produced, one after the other, the lime, the candle, the box of matches, the mirror—all the requisites, including the inventor and improver of the process, represented by



of the Polytechnic, when just as all was ready, in rushed an official with a letter bearing a large and portentous seal. It was an injunction from the Court of Chancery, inhibiting and prohibiting the ghost from walking on Saturday anywhere except at the Polytechnic Institution and the treasuries of the theatres.

To omit to mention the astounding efforts of Mr. Robert Romer, as the Herald, and subsequently as the Lady-in-waiting upon 'Jack in the Green,' would be in the last degree ungenerous and ungrateful. No one worked harder, or with better heart and intention than Mr. Romer. And it was something for a tragic actor, the greatest and best applauded Othello of the age, to condescend to a part in a chummy's procession. But genius adorns and elevates all that it touches, and like gold, suffers no corruption by contact with mean things. Genius has no oxide. And my lady, after fainting for the fiftieth time in the arms of my lord, became Mr. Robert Romer—which is a name for all the virtues which can adorn a man.

Mr. Robert Keeley did not take money at the doors of the Richardsonian theatre as advertised—possibly the noise of the parade was too much for his nerves—but he was 'present on the occasion,' and right pleasant it was to see him in his old age so cheerful and happy. I should have liked to point him out to the Puritan denouncers of the stage as an example of the 'wicked play-actors.' Threescore and ten; still in good health; cheerful and contented; loved and revered by his children; respected by all his brethren, and, by industry and frugality, independent of the world. What a wicked man he must have been to come to such an end as this!

When we have spent our last sixpence, we take a peep into Zadkiel's crystal ball, and find full consolation for all our expenditure. We see the past, the present, and the future—the past, the barren heath of Maybury; the present, the heath adorned with a handsome Gothic building, wanting only the wings to make it complete; the future, the Dramatic College finished—accommodation for a hundred aged, infirm, or unfortunate actors, schools for their children, and a pleasant view of the aged Thespians sitting in the garden, each under the shadow of his own fig-tree. This result, now rapidly being attained, will be due in a great

measure to the annual actors' fete at the Crystal Palace. But while mentioning so many names in connection with this work of benevolence, I must not omit that of the originator and untiring promoter and sustainer of the whole scheme—the name of Benjamin Webster. The name of Alleyne has come down through three centuries

in connection with an actors' charity, which has been perverted to uses which its founder never intended. The name of Benjamin Webster will go down to the future in connection with substantial benefits to the profession, and will be mentioned with blessings by generations of players yet unborn.

A. H.

CLUB CRITICS.

‘WHERE shall we go to-night?’ is a question so common, and so difficult to be satisfactorily answered, that it would make an admirable heading to a theatrical street-placard or newspaper advertisement, wherein the information required might be decisively given according to the interests of the speculator. I make my compliment, and present, free of charge, this excellent notion to any professor of the art of modern puffery. The light dinner is finished: the delicate anchovy-in-oil has been gracefully laid out upon his last resting-place of thin, dry toast, while I, charged with the due celebration of the rite, have cast upon him the white dust of well-grated parmesan, and, the ceremony of interment concluded, have with no sparing hand poured out a libation of sound wholesome claret. My

heart yearns towards the companion of my early years and my late dinner. It is to this swelling feeling of affection in my bosom, that I attribute the unusual tightness of waistcoat. Ah! traitor tailor, have I not often warned thee how I and thou must part, an’ certain buttons refuse to meet?

My dear Tom, who is younger than myself, and unable properly to appreciate a ‘quiet evening,’ stretches his legs, rises from the table, and walks to the window. I remember now that we had intended going to some theatre in the course of the evening. It was my antepandial suggestion. I have calmer thoughts now, and am not what I was. Let us, in my present proposal, have a cigar and a chat. No; he is for the theatre. There is, I tell him, an excellent Strangers’ Smoking-room; for, you see, I have been

entertaining my *convive* at the club mahogany; and, on soft couches perfumed with the choicest tobacco—

‘Impune licebit
Æstivam sermone benigno tendere noctem.’

No; he will none of it: he cares not for Horace, and wants to see as much as he can of some profane stage-play. I sigh and yield. We examine the thin paper bills fluttering in the draughts of the hall.

‘I shouldn’t mind,’ he says, ‘seeing Miss Steel Collars again.’

‘It’s not Steel Collars,’ I return, pretending not to be alive to his feeble wit: ‘it’s Mademoiselle Stella Colas. Well, let us go.’

He has by this time got hold of another entertainment.

‘What do I say,’ he asks, ‘about “The Haunted Man?”’

I don’t know what to say about ‘The Haunted Man,’ being indifferent as to my destination.

‘It’s very good, isn’t it?’ he continues.

I reply that I believe it is.

‘There’s a screaming burlesque to follow the “Ghost,”’ he tells me.

It strikes me at the moment that if the burlesque had been followed by the ‘Ghost,’ it might have had good reason for screaming; but having lighted my cigar, I keep this to myself. He returns to the charge.

‘Well, what do you say, eh?’

I say what he says. I am ready to accommodate myself to any circumstances. ‘Let us go to the “Ghost.”’

My *convive* actually abuses me for my pliant mood, and tells me that I’ve got no opinion of my own, and no settled ideas on any subject; in fact ‘he never saw such a feller.’ This arouses me, and I inform him that, if he wants really to see something good, we ought to catch what we can of ‘The Ticket-of-Leave Man’ at the Olympic. He agrees. ‘Ho! porter, a cab.’ In the neighbourhood of Wellington Street my volatile friend fancies ‘The Duke’s Motto.’ It is now that hour peculiar to the theatrical night—not marked on watch or clock, or tabled among the divisions of time—known as ‘Half price,’ and to us, arriving

at such an hour, the complicated plot will be an inexplicable mystery.

‘Now, I’ (this is what I tell my companion) ‘have seen the Olympic piece, and can set you right at any point.’

‘But,’ says my friend, ‘we both have seen the “Motto,” and require no explanation; besides, I shouldn’t mind seeing it again.’

‘Very good, then; the Lyceum be it. I thought so: we can’t get a place.’

We waste our time in trying every part of the house, and come out hot and weary. The same result at the Olympic, only that we are hotter and wearier. He sets his face to go to the Gardens of Cremorne. I resolutely set my face against anything of the sort. He yields at length to my unflinching determination, and I lead him gently back to the Strangers’ Smoking-room, ‘where,’ I say to him, playfully, ‘beneath the shady smoke of a cool, fragrant cigar, we can—oh, my Tom Tityrus!—talk over matters theatrical.’

‘That’s a great success, that “Duke’s Motto,” isn’t it?’ says Tom Tityrus at full length on a sofa. ‘There’s a lot of money to be made out of a theatre.’

‘More out of it than in it, I fancy,’ observes Lollius, the lounge, who has just dropped into an arm-chair.

‘As in every speculation, when a man makes a happy hit he fills his coffers, so the manager who suits the public taste makes a fortune.’

‘And very seldom keeps it,’ says Tom Tityrus. ‘But what is the public taste?’

‘For sensation dramas, decidedly,’ answers Lollius.

‘I question that, or will question it presently when the waiter has done his spiriting.’ (This is the Present Writer’s observation: he may for the future be known as the P. W.)

‘Then comes the inquiry,’ says Tom Tityrus, framing a little theatrical catechism, ‘Who gave them that taste? Surely, the managers. They sow, cultivate, and gather the fruits.’

‘Managers,’ remarks the P. W.

'appear to me more like anglers than gardeners. At different seasons they use different bait. They note which takes the best. Old Izaak Walton must have tried for chub with his ant-flies, flesh-flies, black bees, and snails many a time before he alighted upon that grand idea, which caused him to write of this fish, that "he *never* refuses a grasshopper on the top of a swift stream, nor at the bottom the young, humble bee."'

'Well, but,' cries Tom Tityrus, politely adding, 'I beg your pardon,' seeing that he has interrupted the speaker.

'Well, as the grasshopper to Izaak Walton, so the happy hit to the manager; and as the grasshopper to the chub, so the sensation drama to the public.'

'Then you mean to say,' says Tom Tityrus, who has been waiting patiently, 'that the public will *always* be taken by a sensation drama?'

'Yes.'

'Ah!' observes Lollius, 'some Play with nothing but jumping into rivers after exhausted damsels, scaling walls with babies in arms, combats of five to one, setting fire to old mansions, and escaping down a melting leaden waste-pipe, murders, ghosts—a regular Richardsonian affair, in fact—that is the style you say will always take.'

'No; you misunderstand me. Your taste, by-the-way, is evidently for burlesque. In any drama you cannot separate action from dialogue: the former without the latter is mere pantomime; the latter alone would be a sort of prosaic concert. The dramatic author must aim at what are called "telling situations" even more than at a highly-polished and sparkling dialogue. You remember the lines in the "Ars Poetica," and must feel the truth of them as regards the stage.'

'What lines?' asked Lollius, troubled by the perversity of a stopped-up pipe.

'Oh!' says the P. W., 'um—um,' and taps his forehead.

'Nothing flows from that tap,' observes Tom Tityrus.

'Yes, I've got it—

'*Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et
quæ
Ipse sibi tradit spectator.*'

'By Jove!' cries Lollius, 'what a good boy you must have been at Eton! I used to be a good hand at a 'saying-lesson,' and I think I recollect how, a few lines further on, Horace disapproves of anything like our modern sensational situations. Isn't there something about not letting Medea murder her children before the audience? What is it?—

'*Nec . . . pueros . . . Medea.*'

'You're murdering the text: do let Medea alone. I know what the P. W. means,' says Tom Tityrus; 'and Sheridan's "School for Scandal" is a model for all dramatic writers. I agree with him in the general question.'

'"The Colleen Bawn,"' observes Lollius, blowing at his troublesome pipe, 'owed its success to the "header."'

'No!' cry Tityrus and the P. W.

'Oh, nonsense!' says Lollius, as if any opinion contrary to his own were unworthy further consideration; 'pooh!'

'Pooh!' returns the P. W., 'doesn't carry much weight as an argument. The sketches of Irish character in "The Colleen Bawn" were admirable; the plot was well constructed; and the play itself was, at the Adelphi, as well acted as one could possibly wish to see it. The manner in which it was placed on the stage——'

'Reflected great credit, &c. &c.,' interrupted Lollius: 'that's what the ponny-a-liners say. It certainly was well "got up," though. I saw it three times. I think I like the cottage scene the best, where they sing—

'*Grammachree, ma cruiskeen lawn;*' :

and here Lollius, there being no one besides ourselves in the room, gives us an imitation, and we join in chorus.

'Your attention is requested to No. 67 in the "books,"' intones Master Tityrus; whereat we smile knowingly, as they who have at-

tained to the meaning of the 'shibboleth,' and have heard the chimes at midnight in the classic realms of Covent Garden. Chimes at midnight! what a nuisance to a sleepy neighbourhood!

'A sensational piece, *quâ* sensation, is not sufficient to attract. It will no more draw,' says Tom Tityrus to Lollius, who is sucking furiously at a small meerschaum, 'than your pipe.'

In less than two seconds a volume of smoke issues from Lollius' mouth.

'Your simile's a good one, Tit, my boy,' observes Lollius. 'But even such a play as you mention will draw, if, like my pipe, it has plenty of puffing.'

'Didn't "The Peep o' Day" draw?' suggests the P. W.

'Yes,' says Tityrus; 'that's an exceptional case.'

'Why did you go to see it?' asks P. W.

'Because every one went,' was the wise and truthful answer.

'And every one went because——.' P. W. pauses for a reply; the pipe and cigars puff, puff, puff.

'What I understand by a modern taste for sensation,' commences Lollius, 'is that morbid wish to sup full of horrors which lately found its full development in the fate of that unfortunate Female Blondin at Aston Park. Now we met with this in "The Colleen Bawn," and more of it in "Peep o' Day," more in "The Octoroon;" and lastly in "The Duke's Motto" Mr. Fechter has a short acrobatic performance on a rope. Now I suppose when ropes, broken boughs of trees, fragile bridges, precipices, avalanches, explosions, and volcanic eruptions have all been tried, we escaping from the fearful storm of situations and effects, shall at length sail into the quiet waters of high-art comedy and thoughtfully developed tragedy; a haven where we fain would be.'

'Drop in at the Haymarket one night when Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer" is played,' advised the P. W. 'It is refreshing; and there is, I believe, a good house whenever it is produced.'

'By the way,' observes Lollius, 'it's Goldsmith who complains of

the fondness of the people for "sensations," in *his* day.'

The P. W. remembers that this occurs in 'The Citizen of the World.'

'My dear Lollius,' says Tom Tityrus, 'the same public who brought a fortune to the Adelphi as patrons of the sensational Irish drama, crowded the other house, during the same season, mark you, in order to listen to Sothern's *Dundreary*.'

'Anything first-rate of its kind must succeed. The public always recognize real sterling talent, and in the long run they are the best judges.'

This opinion of Lollius' is immediately called in question, and a sharp discussion ensues, which ends by Tityrus asserting that if a play of Shakespeare's had been produced for the first time in 1863 the public would not have appreciated it. Lollius joins issue, but somehow or another appears to be glad to turn the conversation.

'I should like to hear the "Divine Williams" taking a play now-a-days to some management,' says the P. W., much amused at the notion. '"Hamlet," for instance, would be rejected on account of the immorality of the plot.'

'Ay!' (here Tityrus jumps up, struck with a grand idea) 'but 'twould be accepted by an enterprising manager, for the sake of the *Ghost* effect. The manager would probably tell Shakespeare that he might be able to do something with the Ghost, only he *must* cut short those long speeches—that one about "To be or not to be," and certain others, which he would query in the MS., and make the whole thing play closer.'

'Yes,' cries Lollius, who has taken a book down from the shelf, 'and fancy a manager requesting Mr. Shakespeare to read his little tragedy of "Macbeth" to him!' Here Lollius begins, "*Act I. Scene 1. An open place. Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.*" The manager would be pleased at this, and see a grand effect. Now for the dialogue:—

'*First Witch.* When shall we three meet again,

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

'*Second Witch.* When the hurly-burly's done——'

'“The *what*?” says the manager.

'“The hurlyburly,” replies Mr. Shakespeare.

'“Oh! oh!—of course—yes. Go on, please,” says the manager, not liking to expose his ignorance.

'*Second Witch.* When the hurly-burly's done;

When the battle's lost and won.

'*Third Witch.* That will be ere set of sun.

'“Might get a pretty effect of sunset there, Mr. Shakespeare, eh?” observes the intelligent manager.

'“Hem!” says Shakespeare, dubiously. “P'raps we'd better consider that presently.”

'*First Witch.* Where the place?

'*Second Witch.* Upon the heath.

'*Third Witch.* There to meet Macbeth.'

'“Beth don't rhyme with heath,” thinks the manager; but he says nothing, and Mr. William continues:—

'*First Witch.* I come, Graymal-kin.'

'*Manager.* Eh? Who? You didn't read out his name in the *Dramatis Personæ*.'

'*Mr. Shakespeare.* No; it's a familiar.'

'*Manager.* Oh!'

Mr. Shakespeare proceeds:—

'*All.* Paddock calls——

'“Paddock!” interrupts the manager. “What! the prizefighter? I really do not like the mention of those subjects in my theatre. We have, I assure you, to guard against any allusion to such low matters as the ring; and so——”

'*Mr. Shakespeare.* It's a spirit.

'*Manager.* I never heard of a spirit called Paddock, and I question the taste of the introduction of such topics.'

The author goes on reading.

'*All.* Paddock calls:—Anon.—

Fair is foul, and foul is fair,
Hover through the fog and
filthy air.'

'The manager,' observes Tom Tityrus, 'would certainly pronounce the penultimate line rather too obscure.'

'Yes,' says the P. W., 'and when they appear again in Scene iii. I

fancy the manager would think it advisable to “cut” a good deal of the dialogue.'

'*First Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister?

'*Second Witch.* Killing swine.'

'And when the manager wants to get on to the action of the piece, he would not have any very exalted opinion of the author who stopped to give an account of a sailor's wife munching chestnuts in her lap—a sailor's wife, too, who had nothing whatever, mind, to do with the piece, and was not even mentioned among “Lords, gentlemen, officers, murderers, and messengers” at the end of the *Dramatis Personæ*.'

'Yes,' adds Lollius, 'and what sense could he get out of the First Witch's simile—

“And like a rat without a tail,

“I'll do, I'll do, I'll do.”'

'Do what, eh?'

'By Jove!' says Tityrus, 'I never thought of that before: of course, do what?'

'Well, then,' the P. W. puts in, 'the manager would insist upon Duncan being murdered upon the stage, and introduce a struggle.'

'I think that the acting play of “Richard III.” and “Romeo and Juliet” is more dramatically interesting than the original,' says Lollius. 'In “Romeo and Juliet,” for instance, as lately played at the Princess's, with a very excellent Romeo, by-the-way, in Walter Montgomery——'

'I should like to see Fechter and Stella Colas in “Romeo and Juliet,”' shouts Tityrus, interrupting, as is his wont, and politely apologizing for it immediately afterwards.

'Well, I was going to say,' resumes Lollius, 'that Shakespeare makes Romeo die before Juliet awakes. Now in Garrick's stage version, after Romeo has taken poison, Juliet returns to consciousness, the lovers embrace, and are looking forward to a happy termination of all their sorrows, when the pains of death suddenly seize upon Romeo, and he dies in Juliet's arms. Then, as in the original, she plunges her lover's dagger into her own heart, and falls prone upon his body.'

'That's more exciting than the

written business!" exclaims Tom Tityrus.

'It is,' returns Lollius, 'and to my mind improves the situation.'

'A mere trick,' says the P. W. 'I dare say Shakespeare thought of and rejected it. How many possibilities did not the mind of the Poet reject which would have satisfied a lesser man!'

'Well, for my part,' says Lollius, taking up his hat, 'give us a really good comedy, and we, the public, satiated with the gymnastic drama of the extreme sensational school, will crowd to see them. I hope we shall never go beyond the limit to which the Olympic "Ticket-of-Leave Man" reaches.'

'That's Tom Taylor's, isn't it?' asks Tityrus.

'Yes, a genuine success, without any puffing. The last scene gives us a legitimate sensation.'

'I hear he's doing something

about *Brother Sam* for Sothern's reappearance next season.'

'Well,' says Lollius, 'when Shakespeare doth ride abroad, may I be there to see.'

'Where's Phelps?' asks the P. W.

'At Drury Lane,' replies Tom Tityrus; 'they're going to bring out "*Manfred*," I believe. Belmore's there too.'

'Ah!' says Lollius, 'what an excellent bit of acting that *Softy* of his was at the Princess's, eh?'

'Yes,' assents the P. W., 'the abject cringing, and piteous whining of the brute nature dreading punishment, was well conceived and marvellously executed.'

'But, I say,' breaks in Tom Tityrus, looking at his watch, 'it's quite early. Where shall we go to-night?'

This time the question is easily answered,—

'To bed.'

'I REMEMBER.'

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'FESTUS.'

I REMEMBER when free as the wind,
 'Mid a summer day's soft sunny hours,
 We wandered—you bear it in mind—
 Through a garden o'erloaded with flowers.
 How we loitered at every turn;
 How we paced it again and again;
 There was something I wished I could learn;
 There was something I feared to explain.

I remember your ringlets of gold;
 I remember your raiment of green;
 Each long and voluminous fold,
 Your feet and your girdle between.
 The lilies I matched with your hand,
 And in height proved you equally tall;
 Though you smiled at the measurement planned,
 Yet you frowned when—I will not recal.

I remember the picture you drew
 By the foot of the ivy-grown dell,
 That the spring sparkled playfully through
 From the brink of the fern-shadowed well.
 I remember the streamlet, the grove;
 So silent, so soothing; and yet,
 Though we breathed not an accent of love,
 There were graces I cannot forget.

I remember the grotto concealed
 'Neath the boughs of the far-stretching yew ;
And the pool's tiny breakers revealed
 By the sunshine the wind wafted through.
How often, how vainly I tried
 To entice you to step in the boat ;
How timid you seemed by the side,
 How bravely you bore it afloat.

Those waters have wasted away ;
 That garden is misery's own ;
It is base as the crowd-trodden way,
 It is wild weed, and bramble, and stone.
Though to name but that pleasure and you,
 Is the all I can claim as my right ;
Yet whate'er be to destiny due,
 That day was a life of delight.

I remember, as evening drew nigh,
 One star with its tremulous beam ;
One cloudlet that saddened the sky ;
 One rock in the flow of our dream.
We parted with diffident smiles,
 Our bright day of joyance was o'er ;
We knew not the world nor its wiles ;
 Oh ! bid me remember no more.

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

(Slightly altered from the Original.)

I.

SO, the season at last is quite over,
And 'my lady,' grown sallow and pale,
Has flown off with her daughters to Dover,
For sea breezes and 'Stogumber ale.'

II.

'Rotten Row' is a perfect Sahara ;
 Little Patti enchanteth no more ;
And Ronconi, as quack 'Dulcamara,'
 Has droned out a gruff 'Au revoir.'

III.

'Haut ton' not a déjeuner dreams of ;
 Balls, dinners, are quite out of date ;
And (oh, Babbage!) the horrible screams of
 'Brass bands' are all silenced by fate.

IV.

In the Park a poor creature I chanced on,
 A pitiful object to view,
Looking glum, as the brown trees he glanced on ;
 'Twas the 'Last of the Barons.' Eheu !

V.

His lemon-kid listlessly biting ;
 At a non-plus. Ah ! well, I must own
That the prospect looked far from inviting.
 Poor 'last rose' left 'blooming alone.'

VI.

Lady Fanny has rushed off to Paris,
 After making a capital 'catch';
 And 'tis said (by renowned Mrs. Harris)
 That there really *was* flame in that match!

VII.

The 'Trafalgar' to Palmerston's council
 Has offered its sacrifice sweet;
 And the echoes of 'Chickweed and groundsel'
 Are the sole sounds of life in the street.

VIII.

Hem! The 'Last of the Barons' his finger
 Sadly biting, I left with the moths
 In the Park; but if longer I linger,
 I may write myself 'Last of the Gotha.'

IX.

Well; 'At Rome'—oh, you all know the saying;
 And to follow the fashion is best;
 And—there's no use in longer delaying—
 I'll pack up, and be after the rest.

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

SEPTEMBER RHYMES;

Or, *Memories of the First.*

THE First of September! ah, many a vision
 Of glorious autumns those words can supply;
 The day when we one and all laughed in derision
 At the mention of aught but 'the stubbles we'd try.'
 The bright double Mantons, the red and white setters,
 The turnips well guarded for many a week;
 When at breakfast we thrust aside unopened letters,
 And of nothing but partridges ventured to speak.
 Hazel Manor has gardens where roses entwining,
 Shade arbours where flirting's a positive art;
 But on this day we scorned them, though even enshrining
 The beauties who've wounded full many a heart.
 Hazel Manor's a lawn where the *demoiselles* charming,
Bien chaussées à merveille, for croquet prepare;
 But to-day we've a charm that ne'er fails in disarming
 The Balmorals' influence, prized by the fair.
 Ah, pleasant remembrance! The setters' high ranging,
 The rise of the covey, the ringing report,
 The fair English scenery, sweet, though unchanging,
 The fresh autumn breeze, and the glorious sport,
 The lunch, where the pop of Moselle corks gave token
 Of the sparkling reward of our labour well-earned;
 The 'one weed' that followed, in silence unbroken;
 Till, refreshed, to the 'beat' we all gladly returned!
 And then, in the evening, the exquisite dinner,
 Where we talked of the bag, and then passed in review
 The season just past, and each fortunate winner
 Of the prizes of Hymen—those sought-after few
 Who weren't 'detrimentals,' whose acres and money
 Brought round them the bevy of loveliest grace;
 Who were answered by chaperons' accents of honey;
 Who brought a kind smile on each stern mother's face.
 And then how we ended our First of September;
 A waltz in the antler-bedecked oaken hall.
Ay de mi! Even now I plainly remember
 That whirl with the fairest and sweetest of all.
 To the strains of 'Il Bacco,' tenderly dying
 Away in the echoes, as out from the tower
 The midnight chime floated the dirge of hours flying,
 So quickly, so sweetly, like bloom from the flower!
 Bright memories these; but *this* First I am lonely,
 And wandering thoughtfully on the dark pier;
 The surging waves' music, alas! is the only—
 The only sound waking the night-echo near.
 The glittering stars are all gleaming in splendour,
 In an azure sky, solemn in exquisite calm,
 That calls to mind words and thoughts speechlessly tender,
 And pours on the wounded heart solace and balm.
 But I grow sentimental. The vapour curls round me,
 The blue fragrant cloud of a *nonpareil* weed;
 And with it the happiest visions surround me,
 Of autumns whose pleasures were matchless indeed.
 'Tis the best philosophical course to endeavour
 To picture a future that's pleasanter still;
 Then I'll finish by hoping that nothing will sever
 My joy in the First. That's a cure for each ill!—W. R.

ENGLISH DINING-ROOMS IN PARIS.

THE difference between the savage and the civilized man is that one eats, the other dines. The savage has no appointed time for meals. He feels hungry, kills something, kindles a fire, burns his food, and devours. The civilized man has his table carefully spread at properly regulated intervals of time, and invites commerce and science to compete to serve the banquet. For him ships sail, gardeners experimentalize, chemists cogitate, and cooks perspire. Great are the distinctions, ethnological, social, and personal, between the mere feeder and the man who dines.

'You see,' said a friend of ours, a great gastronome and authority on matters culinary, 'so few men know how to dine or to give dinners. No man wants to go through a set dinner every day, it would tire him to death, but he wants his one dish cooking, not spoiling. And then again at grand dinners, how badly they are arranged! There are too many things to choose from, the mind gets confused, and then away goes all enjoyment. There should be enough and there should be choice, but not more; and there may be one surprise in the dinner, but not more than one. One is agreeable, stimulates the appetite, enlivens conversation, and is a point of general interest. Men's minds, as it were, meet in the dish, but two give rise to argument and dispute and opposition.'

'Do they really?' I said, astonished.

'Oh! yes,' replied my friend, dogmatically. 'The palate and the stomach have a mentality of their own, and are delicate and sensitive to a sneer or an allusion. Some people are so stupid! A man I dine with, an excellent fellow in other respects, because I once happened to praise a particular thing, always gives me *that* particular thing whenever I sit down to his table. Can you conceive such ignorance? The very name of the dish nauseates me now, and I always refuse his in-

vitations; so I have lost two pleasures by his stupidity.'

'The idiot!' I murmured, indignantly.

'Quite so, quite so,' said my friend. 'Have you read Francatelli?'

'No,' I answered, blushing for my ignorance of the literature of my native land.

'Clever book; very clever book. Divide Francatelli by half—that is, put in half the seasoning, pepper, girofle, and so on, and you get the perfection of cookery. The salmon looks good to-day. Good morning.'

It is singular to see in Paris, from which charming city I write, the concessions made in restaurants, cafés, and hotels to what are presumed to be British tastes. Round about the Rue de la Paix, and the English quarter, houses as unmistakeably Parisian in appearance as pralines, bonbons, and sergens-de-ville, boldly print upon their doorposts, in gilded letters, the words 'Britannic Tavern. Mock turtle always ready.' What wonderful appreciation of the habits and feeding instincts of the haughty islander, who must always have his bulldog by his side and his basin of mock turtle at his elbow! So completely have the English colonized the neighbourhood that not only the Britannic Tavern and its ever-present mock turtle meets the eye everywhere in molten lustre, but the chemists and druggists roll pills and mix draughts suitable to English maladies and English indigestions. A large shop proclaims itself, in yellow letters six feet high, as 'The English Pharmacy,' and a golden legend follows that informs the dyspeptic foreigner that 'Natural soda-water' and 'magnesia' are to be drunk upon the premises. 'Natural soda-water!' This is indeed to be almost in England. We wonder the spirited entrepreneur does not also advertise 'real calomel,' or 'Cockle's antibilious pills without adulteration.' And magnesia too! Why make magnesia a leading article? It is an exceptional thing to find in

chemists' shops? or are English visitors supposed to be peculiarly attracted by that cooling powder? When the blond Briton enters the pharmacy, even before he commences with his perpetual 'Avez vous,' does the international chemist and druggist say to him, 'Do not give yourself the pain to speak, sir. I guess your wants. You are English and require magnesia. We have all sorts of magnesia. Magnesia hot, magnesia cold, magnesia still, magnesia sparkling. Behold!'

Goldsmith's beggar said that he hated the French because they were all slaves and wore wooden shoes. From my point of view let me say that I like the French, though they do not understand political freedom and eat ragouts. Let me also say that, although when in strange lands I trust that I feel the eyes of Baker Street are upon me, and bear myself with becoming pride, I infinitely prefer French cookery to that very plain roast and boiled, and that very gross grease and gravy which are the prandial glories of this free country, the ruin of the digestion, and the parents of bile.

Animated by the twofold desire of making gastronomic discovery and of getting the best dinners and breakfasts I could find, I resolved on a course of experimental meals; that is, believing that with the French, cookery is a science, and that with us it is a mere overboiled or underdone accident, I resolved on tasting how French artists treated British dishes. I had seen how French tragedians treated our grand standard intellectual dishes, and had been delighted with the elegant and accomplished foreigners' performances, and so went in full confidence in search of a Parisian chef's skilful handling of tea, beef, and, of course, mock turtle, without which, taking a Parisian view of English character, what is life?

It was high noon in the city of white façades and enormous Roman capitals when I bent my steps towards the Rue d'Aguesseau. I had made up my mind to renounce the spicy sausage of Lorraine, the lobster salad, the 'jumped' kidneys, fried potatoes, fleshy cherries, and pleasant

acid wine that usually formed my déjeuner, and to go in for breakfast after the manner of my ancestors; to give up my beautiful black, bitter, aromatic coffee, and—greatly daring—try some tea. I reached my British tavern, whose very windows and portals promised pale ale, lunches, and stout, entered, and found everything arranged *café* fashion, except that the lady behind the counter, instead of being surrounded by vases of flowers, small statuary, and the like, was supported on her right by a large piece of beef, cooked to please the presumed English appetite—that is, hardly cooked at all—and on her left by an enormous highly-varnished and illuminated ham. Cold veal cutlets and yesterday's sausages, these last looking very crumby and neglected, were grouped about her in symmetrical order. That the *dame du comptoir* in a restaurant should have an entourage of eatables is no doubt severely practical, but I am still sentimental enough to prefer the flowers and a little fountain in a nest of fernery.

'Waut would you like to taïke, saïr?' said a waiter as soon as I had sat down. He spoke very good English, with but a slight accent.

'I'll take some breakfast.'

'Yais, saïr. Coffee?'

'No, tea.'

'A pot of tea; yais, saïr; and some beef—rosbif?'

I shuddered as I looked at the half-raw mass of meat. The waiter, who was an artist, saw that I was impressionable, and permitted me to take the initiative.

'What can I have?' I asked.

'Anything you please to order, saïr?' replied he, determined not to shock my sensibilities, but to give my imagination free play. As I had made up my mind to have a perfectly British meal, my first idea, of course, was bacon; but I remembered that I had been once served with a small square lump of fat like a compact grease brick, and the recollection terrified me. I looked at the dish that seemed to garnish the *dame du comptoir*, as the parsley garnished the dish, and said, 'I'll take some——ham!'

'Yais, sair. Du jambon!' he shouted, as if the dame du comptoir were a mile off. The lady rose, smiled at me as if to say, 'I take the greatest possible pleasure in serving *you*,' and seizing a dreadful sacrificial-looking knife, whose edge was even sharper than her smile was sweet, began to carve juicily and daintily.

When a thick, heavy plate had been covered with slices of Vauxhallian tenuity, the preparations for my banquet languished. I seemed to pass out of the waiter's memory, and the dame du comptoir, with a perfidy only excusable from the proverbial coquetry of the Parisienne, bestowed her smiles upon a black-bearded Frenchman, who entered and commanded half a bottle of wine and half a yard of bread.

Was it possible! The misguided native, possibly impelled by a desire to have the air Britannic, desired beef. I cannot describe that scene of horror; suffice it that, according to the printed nursery legend about apple pie, the dame du comptoir Cut it, the waiter Brought it—the—the—the Vampire—I can call him nothing else—Divided it, and He (E without the H in the original) Eat it! I thought of rushing from the restaurant breakfastless, but as I conceived my flight my eye caught that of the dame du comptoir, who smiled me into subjugation, and I kept my seat.

For three-quarters of an hour did I wait for that pot of tea, my plate of ham upon the counter taunting me the whole time. I endeavoured to amuse myself with the 'Siècle,' the 'Presse,' and the 'Constitutionnel'—the vampire had secured yesterday's 'Times'—and read those dreary faits divers that reflect so much discredit on the research, and so much credit on the invention of the Gallic penny-a-liner.

Fifty minutes, and no pot of tea! Perhaps, I thought, though the Parisian takes more time than the London chef, the result is more perfect, or perhaps the water does not boil.

At last! A small and rickety teapot, the knob of the lid cocked knowingly on one side, was brought

in by the waiter, who was obviously afraid of it. Monsieur was served. Ham, bread, English mustard, all! I observed the waiter eye me with anxiety. I poured out the tea, which was pale, 'nay, very pale,' put in milk and sugar, and sipped a spoonful.

Mrs. Gamp once observed that 'fiddle-strings were weakness to express her nerves' upon a particular occasion. To pursue that lady's cloudy metaphor violoncello-strings were filaments to describe that tea. I was just about to order a cup of coffee when the waiter came up to the table and said—

'Per-rhaps, sair, your tea is not quite str-rong enough?'

'Not quite,' I replied, sarcastically, ladling it about, as if it were too hot soup.

'Permit, sair, that I fetch again.'

And I had to endure another interval of twelve minutes; but this time I solaced myself with 'Figaro' and 'La Vie Parisienne.' My rakish-looking teapot was again brought me; the tea was a little stronger, but not much. I managed a cup of it, and then made up with coffee and cognac. My little note amounted to—

	Fr.	Cent.
Tea	1	50
Ham	1	0
Bread	0	10
Butter	0	20
Coffee, &c.	0	60
	<hr/>	
Total	3	40
	<hr/>	

My next was a mock-turtle soup experience. I had often eyed the lively 'Mock Turtle,' as I called the restaurant to myself; and one cool day in January I determined to satisfy my curiosity and appetite. I entered, and an odour as of mock turtle in solution was wafted to my nostrils. The saloon was old-fashioned, and somewhat dark—two things especially agreeable to me. I detest dining in the glare and glitter of a hundred gas-jets, a thousand cut-glass lustres, and the million prisms dangling and dazzling therefrom. Can any decoration for a dining-room be more unfortu-

nate and inappropriate than that of mirrors? Who but a Parisian could possibly require a looking-glass to see himself dine by? Often, as I have trifled over a *vol-au-vent*, have I been shocked by the sight of my own face and figure, forty times repeated. When I have caught a piece of mushroom on my fork, I have shuddered to see forty men catch at forty pieces of mushroom upon one hundred and sixty silver prongs, and convey these forty pieces of mushroom to eighty lips. It was not like feeding your individual self, but giving rations to a multitude. The thought would cross me, Have I to provide for all these people every day? But this is a digression—*revenons à nos mock turtles!*

The paper on the walls of the salon was a dark-green and gold, embossed with maroon-coloured figures, that I fancied were mock-turtles struggling into life again, and embellishing the locality in which they had departed this shell in the form of escutcheons. The waiter was a grave, bald man, who, I thought, looked musical, and who, I felt, marked down my nationality the instant he set eyes on me. As soon as I was seated, he gave me a bill of fare, like a hand barometer, and said in deep tones—

‘Mac Turk!’

I knew that he meant mock turtle, but I was struck by his pronunciation, and wished him to repeat it; he did so.

‘Mac Tartan!’ he said, the second time. Could he have supposed it was a Scotch dish, that he laid such an emphasis on the Mac? Impossible. English, Scotch, Irish, Welch, Manx, Orkneyan, Guernseyic, Jernic, Alderneyan, or Sarkalian, were all lumped up by him as Britannic.

I replied ‘Oui,’ and was served with a basin of very excellent soup, but no more like mock turtle than I to the island of Ascension; and oh, what a compliment to the Britannic digestion did that chef pay, in the amount of pepper and spice infused into that highly-flavoured pottage!

There is a very well-known restaurant in Paris, not—to quote

the style of the provincial newspapers—a hundred miles from the Madeleine, where I have dined and breakfasted often. From its sign it would appear to claim some not remote connection with the city and corporation of London; let us therefore on the present occasion call it, ‘Og, Gog, and Magog’s Oyster-Rooms,’ or, for the sake of abbreviation, the ‘Og and Gog.’

From the display on the counters of the ‘Og and Gog,’ the visitor might think a call from the three giants themselves was momentarily expected. Huge lumps of beef, cold legs of mutton, large hams, half-hundredweights of cheese, bisected pork-pies, fruit tarts, puddings—no, I am not exaggerating; puddings and celery are piled upon the marble. There is no deception in these viands. There they stand, heavy, honest, raw, and smiling; each bold bone and piece of luscious fat seeming to say, ‘You see me as I am. I stand on my own merits, and disdain the aid of olives, mushrooms, cockscombs, and kickshaws. I want no adventitious flavours; and if you like me, cut and come again; there is plenty of me, and *you know what you are eating!* Rule Britannia!’

As the good cheer upon the counter is essentially English, so is the lady who blooms behind it essentially French. Dark-haired, dark-eyed, and comely, handsome as Hebe, there is around her the air of comfort that seems to accompany the presence of an English hostess, with the vivacity, quick smile, and readiness to oblige of a Parisienne.

The society at the ‘Og and Gog’—that is, the men who sit opposite the beef, ham, and landlady—is of the most mixed and heterogeneous description. Frowsy Frenchmen, speaking tolerable English, who on the airy listlessness of the *flaneur* have grafted the oracular dignity of the chairman of the smoke-room. Solid, stolid, sottish-looking Englishmen, who from long residence in Paris, have acquired a readiness to answer and a disposition to be conversationally officious which sits oddly on countenances that still preserve the compressed lips, and blue-eyed British stare that asks so plainly

of every new comer, 'Who are you, and why the devil do you come where I am?' The chatter is incessant. Shrieks the shrill Gaul, and growls the burly Briton, all the day. Expectorates the Yankee, after arriving at a peroration that always concludes with the word 'firmament' or 'universe.' Softly sighs the sentimental German, as he breathes hard over his beloved dominoes; and gesticulates the rapid and lymphatic Pole, as he describes something he did not do in the distant and down-trodden land afar. Perhaps no language is spoken well there, for each man is anxious to show off his accomplishments, and delights to address his neighbour in what he thinks is that neighbour's mother-tongue. Cheese and butter are demanded in every European patois. The one word heard most frequently is the same from every lip, and that word is 'beer!'

The 'Og and Gog' is not so English as it pretends to be. The omelette is as often called for as the 'rosbif,' and many English dishes are à la Française. One Christmas-day, disclaiming the wiles of foreign art, I and a friend resolved to have our native pudding. Our first course was turkey, but turkey with Gallic garnishing, and chestnut forcemeat; our second, beef, excellent, though somewhat raw; after that they brought us a queer combination intended for plum-pudding. It was a flat slice of conglomerated paste and raisins, was alight with rum, and had an odd taste of burnt spirit and brown paper, like bad snapdragon. My friend ordered mince-pie to follow. I remonstrated, but he said that 'he meant to go the whole "Og and Gog," or none;' and the pastry was served in a blue blaze, like the pudding, and had precisely the same flavour. In the carte plum-pudding is spelt with one *d*, and the visitor is informed that 'plum-puding au rhum' is so much, and plum-puding, nature, so much less; so superior to the cook's sophisticated mind is rum to nature. Before dismissing the 'Og and Gog,' I may confidently recommend the tea there, as being tea, and not tantalization and water.

There is an English restaurant on the Boulevard des Capucines, where everything is English in the best sense of the word. The landlord is English, the waiters are English, and I verily believe the beef is also. There the Briton, palled by scientific cookery, may rush back to the pleasures of his youth, and the vigorous food of his forefathers. There, avoiding the nasal annoyance of the word 'Garçon,' he may call 'Waiter!' with the assurance of being answered 'Yes, sir,' in accents that sound of the coffee-room coffee-roomy. From its agreeable associations, I will call the place 'Bills.' 'Bills,' then, is furnished after the approved and regular café fashion. The white tables, like water-lilies beaten flat; the dark pickled-cabbage coloured velvet 'squabs, sofas, and lounges; the chandeliers, lustres, looking-glasses, and fatigued but smiling dames du comptoir. There is a wealth of flowers, too, at 'Bills,' which makes us ask ourselves why, if 'Bills' kept an old-established hotel on this side the Straits, the flowers would be absent, and the dust present; why the barmaid would be aggressive, and the waiters limp and slipshod; and why everything should be so cheery, clean, and comfortable nine hours from Dover, and so dark, dingy, muddled, and horse-hairy nine miles from it?

At 'Bills' those delicate gastronomic exotics, the beef-steak and the mutton-chop, are produced in perfection; and it is the real steak and the real chop, after the fashion of Fleet Street, that is placed before you—not a sophisticated concoction of egg, bread-crumbs, parsley, and potato-buttons. While on the subject of these last-mentioned vegetables, it may be stated that at 'Bills' they have a wonderful chef, who knows how to cook them au naturel, or, as they would say at the 'Og and Gog,' nature potatoes. This statement may appear incredible; it is nevertheless true. I hope that in consequence of his long services that chef may always be retained on the establishment.

It must not be supposed that because 'Bills' is famous for boiled leg of mutton, and caper-sauce,

roast sirloin, the silver-side, the fore-quarter, and other innocent delights, it is incapable, or even feeble upon the points of filets, balotines, galantines, or cotelettes; on the contrary, they are forthcoming in the same perfection as that genuine roast and boiled, which is the envy of surrounding nations, and the cause of dyspepsia in our own.

I should require tomes to do justice to this interesting subject, or to even mention the names of the hundred and one semi-Britannic restaurants with which the bright, white city, watered by the silver Seine, abounds. There are hotels as English as Long's or Limmer's, but not so comfortable; and round and about the Quartier Vendôme pale ale and the 'Times' are to be had everywhere.

In the hotels the American element is in the ascendant, and the American element is not always an agreeable one. Without the fear of Wall Street before their eyes, and with the power of harassing their unfortunate ambassador into obtaining tickets for Tuileries' receptions and state-balls, the American in Paris is often as disagreeable an animal as the British snob in full flower and pride of porte-monnaie. There is a horrible provincialism of mind and manners in some of the dwellers of Little Pocklington-cum-Peddleton, and the indigenous of Fourth Avenue, that neither time, nor travel, nor tourists' guides, nor douaniers, nor 'Bradshaw,' can subdue.

The American drinks in Paris are excellent. I remember that but

few of these transatlantic beverages were silent; they all fizzed, and hissed, and sputtered, and boiled, and swelled, and called attention to themselves, as if saying, 'Look here! look here! what a superior drink I am! Though but a stone-fence, gum-tickler, corpse-reviver, or what not, I would be Niagara and the Mississippi if I could!'

This, however, is travelling from the record; and after the evidence offered by experience, there can be no doubt that the old adage of doing in Rome as do the Romans, applies with more force to dinners than to any other social institution. Except in certain places in Paris, where you are sure of your host, cook, and waiter, never order an English dinner—as well go to Bradford, in Yorkshire, to order the sort of supper you would expect at the Trois Frères. All dinners are good, and all cookery is good, when you eat of the favourite dish of the country, province, or town that you are in. The fried sole, the steak and mushrooms, the spatch-cock and the jam-pudding, are as admirable in their way as the turtles' fins, cotelettes de Précalé en Macédoine, plovers' eggs, and omelettes au gelée in theirs. There is but one essential difference between first-rate English and first-rate French cookery, and for that the climates are to an extent responsible. To enjoy an English dinner, you must be hungry when you sit down. A French dinner will give you an appetite, as you progress from course to course.

T. W. R.



CURIOSITIES OF FASHION,

In the Matter of Dress.

‘**T**HOU knowest,’ says Borachio, ‘that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.’ Foolish Borachio! But then he had had no experience of ‘London Society;’ and it is possible that in Messina he kept but indifferent company. Or are we to regard him as a supercilious cynic, who looked down upon such trifles as the set of a feather or the cut of a doublet, and busied himself with more important, if less innocent, matters? To such a conclusion his further utterances would seem to guide us. ‘Seest thou not,’ he inquires of his companion, contemptuously, ‘what a deformed thief this fashion is? How giddily he turns about all the hot-bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? Sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh’s soldiers in the reechy painting; sometime, like god Bel’s priests in the old church windows; sometime, like the shaved Hercules in the smirched, worm-eaten tapestry?’ It is true that the fashion, as Conrade sagely conjectures, wears out more apparel than the man; but it deserves to be dealt with in a wider spirit of philosophy than comported with the cynical mood of Borachio, and from its influence upon men, manners, and morals, is not unworthy of the attention of a Buckle or a Macaulay. The relation of a particular fashion to a particular state of society is very obvious, and we may trace the spirit of an age in the attire peculiar to it. Who can fancy a Raleigh, a Sidney, or an Essex in aught but doublets and hose, short cloaks, rapiers, ruffles, and plumed hats? How would a courtier, I beg leave to inquire, fling, with any degree of propriety, a paletôt or a llama to help a virgin queen across a plashy piece of ground? If Leicester had worn the Windsor uniform, do you believe it possible that he could have dazzled Amy Robsart with the splendour of his personal appearance? Or, in the same mysterious combination of

the postman and the footman, would Robert Carr have attracted the attention of James I.? And if he had not, a murder or two, besides some other peccadilloes, would have been happily avoided. If no man was ever so wise as Lord Thurlow *looked*, how much of that wonderfully sagacious aspect was owing to his horse-hair wig? What would become of the Belinda of Pope’s exquisite ‘Rape of the Lock’ without her patches, powder, and hoops? And does not many a beauty whom history or art has made immortal owe much of her fame to her furbelows or high-heeled *bottines*? The difference between a Phryne and a Traviata is, perhaps, a matter of fashion; and a Burleigh in a loose shooting-coat and striped trousers would assuredly not be the much-pondering and often head-shaking councillor of Queen Elizabeth.

It is a question, I think, whether the fashion influences the age, or the age moulds and shapes the fashion; but it is obvious that there exists a subtle relationship between them. A high-bred courtesy, a certain elevation of manner, a loftiness of language, and even a refinement of thought, seem naturally to associate themselves with the rich and stately costume of the men of the sixteenth century. Look at the Cavaliers in the glorious pictures of Vandyck;—who can believe that from the lips of such be-ruffled and be-plumed gentlemen ever dropped any coarse ribaldry or vulgar slang? Those grave and potent seigniors who glow on the splendid canvas of Titian; can you believe them capable of the deeds in which delighted the buckskin-breeches and cocked-hats of our Maccaronis and Mohawks in the days of the second George? When I look upon the sweet and noble women of Vandyck, and compare them with the bare-bosomed beauties of Lely, I trace in the distinction of costume and fashion the difference of morals and taste, and the

wide gulf between the pure household life of the reign of Charles I. and the social abandonment of that of Charles II. Morals and manners keep pace with the changes of costume, and are indicated by them. It is quite in accordance with the philosophy of fashion that the society which countenances 'pretty horse-breakers,' and disguises things vicious with pleasant periphrases of language, should distinguish itself by patronizing huge crinolined monstrosities contrived to expose, and yet encumber, the female figure. It may be that there was as much vice in the times of old, but it was a more decorous vice; and the Doll Tearsheet of Falstaff and his companions did not 'set the fashion' to the wives of Percy and Mortimer.

A writer who proposed to himself to become the historian of fashion would soon find himself perplexed by the absence of all general laws, and the want of any definite divisions of his subject. There is nothing progressive in fashion: on the contrary, its principal tendency is to repeat itself. And this is a necessary consequence of its assimilation to the tastes and passions of the time. In England, for instance, when the English public has one of what Sydney Smith called its 'cold fits of morality,' fashion becomes as severe as it was in the days of the Puritans. The robe *décolleté* is exchanged for the high and close-fitting 'body,' and the skirt descends in sober decency over the well-turned ankle. When the French revolutionists ran mad about classic systems of government, and every ferocious Jacobin thought himself—with a strange confusion of ideas and a remarkable ignorance of history—a Gracchus or a Brutus, how classic became the costume of the Parisian Portias and the *viri togati* of the National Convention! It is a sign of the gradual wearing down of class distinctions,—the cosmopolitan character of the dress of the present day. There is little enough, Heaven knows, as far as attire is concerned, to separate a nobleman whose veins are blue with the best *azul sangre*—the 'blood of all the Howards'—from our Brown, Jones, or Robinson, who

know not their great-grandfathers! When I read of an innkeeper trusting a supposititious Lord John Russell with five shillings and a glass of gin and water, I am inclined to doubt whether the host of 'The Tabard' or 'The Boar's Head' could so easily have been beguiled by a false Earl of Essex. Dress no longer makes the man, nor shows the man as he is. In the gorgeous chamber of the Peers the descendants of the Whigs of 1688, and the Tories who shouted for 'Sacheverel and the Church,' are scarcely to be distinguished from Tomkins, who occupies a stool in a banking-house in the City; or Simpkins, who measures ribbons over a counter in St. Paul's Churchyard. Even the clergy are yielding to the prevailing confusion of ideas, and—O, shades of Barrow and Tillotson!—rejoice in wide-awakes and coats of most uncanonical cut.

In the days that were, a man might hope for immortality from his costume. If he could not be a Milton, a Shakspeare, or a Newton, he might at least have the satisfaction of descending to posterity as a Beau Brummell! There is no such cheap immortality to be earned now-a-days, unless the Empress Eugénie be remembered by the amplitude of her skirts and the peculiarities of her head-gear. In the old biographers you will meet with pages of elaborate description of the attire affected by their heroes; and some of our modern novelists, taking wide views of the philosophy of clothes, are equally precise in their pictorial sketches. But I should like to see a modern biographer attempt to interest his public with a sketch of the costume of any recent 'celebrity.' How much of the character and idiosyncrasies of a man can you identify with a Gibus hat, an Eureka shirt, a Melton paletôt, and a pair of the Sydenham trousers?

If this era of cosmopolitan utilitarianism endures, what will become of the historical associations of dress? Who can reasonably expect that the pegtops or ponchos will ever make any remarkable figure in history? What will the present age hand down to the future in company with

George Fox's suit of home-made leather—honest, sturdy leather—and Raleigh's much-worn cloak?—with Oliver Cromwell's 'plain cloth suit, which' (says Sir Philip Warwick) 'seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor,' and the 'lack-lustre stars' that pointed the deadly aim of Nelson's murderer? We seem to cherish a personal familiarity with Napoleon's *gris redingote*, with the short white cloak that was Wellington's distinctive insignia in battle, with the portentous ruff of Queen Elizabeth, the black velvet robe that clothed the fair form of Mary of Scotland on the day of her execution, and 'the doublets quilted for stiletto proof, and breeches in great plaits and full stuffed,' of James I.? In a gallery of historical personages you may almost identify each of them by their peculiar attire. This, you say, is Spinoza, and that is Henri Quatre; this is Nell Gwynne, and that Marie Antoinette. I wonder whether our descendants will so easily recognize ourselves!

One of the 'Curiosities of Fashion,' as far as dress is concerned, was the extreme sumptuousness of the attire in which our seventeenth-century ancestors indulged. Everybody will remember the description by John Taylor, the Water Poet, of the wasteful squires and luxurious cavaliers who were not ashamed to

'Wear a farm in shoe-strings edged with gold,
And spangled garters worth a copyhold;
A hose and doublet which a lordship cost;
A gaudy cloak, three manors' price almost;
A beaver band, and feather for the head,
Priced at the church's tythe, the poor man's bread.'

George Villiers, the splendid favourite of James I., exceeded all his compeers in the lavish costliness of his garb. On one great occasion he had twenty-seven suits of clothes made, 'the richest that embroidery, lace, silk, velvet, silver, gold, and gems could contribute; one of which was a white uncut velvet, set all over, both suit and cloak, with diamonds valued at fourscore thousand pounds, besides a great feather stuck all over with diamonds, as were also his sword, girdle, hat, and spurs.' This exquisite gentleman would have

the flashing gems which adorned his attire affixed so loosely that he could shake them off as he paraded through the gallery of Whitehall, much to the edification and contentment of *les dames de la cour* who picked them up. On his embassy to Paris the splendour of his appearance completely dazzled the French nobles. 'He appeared there,' says Lord Clarendon, 'with all the lustre the wealth of England could adorn him with, and outshined all the bravery that court could dress itself in, and overacted the whole nation in their own most peculiar vanities.' It was common with him, at an ordinary dancing, to have his clothes trimmed with great diamond buttons, and to wear diamond hat-bands, cockades, and ear-rings, to be yoked with great and manifold ropes and knots of pearl;—in short, to be manacled, fettered, and imprisoned in jewels. At the time of his death he is said to have possessed 300,000*l.* in jewels—a stock which might almost excite the envy of Hancock or Emanuel, and may be borne in mind when we peruse Sir William Davenant's eulogium on the prosperous courtier—

'The court's bright star, the clergy's advocate;
The poet's brightest theme, the lover's flame,
The soldier's glory, mighty Buckingham.'

Raleigh, the bright particular star of the galaxy which moved and shone around the great Gloriana, was equally profuse in his expenditure upon dress. A portrait is extant in which he appears attired in a white satin pinked vest, close-sleeved to the wrist; over the body a brown doublet, finely flowered and embroidered with pearl; in the feather of his hat a large ruby and pearl drop, at the bottom of the sprig, in place of a button; his trunks or breeches, with his stockings and riband garters, fringed at the end, are all white; his shoes, of buff, adorned with white riband. These shoes on important occasions would glitter with precious stones of the value of 6,600*l.* (nearly 80,000*l.* at the present standard of money); and their wearer would occasionally present himself before the eyes of his lady-love, Mistress Elizabeth Throckmorton, in a suit of armour of solid silver, his sword and belt

flashing unutterable radiance from a hundred diamonds, pearls, and rubies. The elder Disraeli tells of a simple knight who wore at the coronation of James I. a cloak which cost him 500*l*. At the marriage of Elizabeth of Bohemia—perpend, ye ladies!—Lady Wotton shone resplendent in a gown, which was stiff with embroidery, at 50*l*. a yard! The Lady Arabella Stuart,—that heroine of a strange and sad romance,—

‘Ornament both of herself and sex,
And mirror bright, where virtues did reflex’—

set the said mirror in a framework of satins and velvets valued at 1,500*l*. We read of a certain Sir Thomas Glover, who burst upon the world of fashion ‘like a comet, all in crimson velvet and beaten gold;’ and Hay, Earl of Carlisle, ambassador to Paris in 1616, dressed not only himself but his trumpeters,—the latter ‘in tawny velvet liveries laced all over with gold, rich and closely laid,’—while his horse was shod with silver shoes, which, ‘when he came to a place where persons or beauties of eminence were, he, prancing and curvetting, in humble reverence flung away; and so he was content to be gazed on and admired till a farrier, or rather the *argentier*, in one of his rich liveries, among his train of footmen, out of a tawney velvet bag took others and tacked them on.’ Quaint Arthur Wilson describes one of ‘the meanest of the suits’ of this sumptuous peer. ‘The cloak and hose,’ he says, ‘are made of very fine white beaver, embroidered richly all over with gold and silver; the cloak, almost to the cape, within and without, having no lining but embroidery; the doublet was cloth of gold, embroidered so thick that it could not be discerned; and a white beaver hat suitable, brimful of embroidery, both above and below.’

A notable article of costume in the reigns of the Tudors and the Stuarts, both with men and women, were the starched ruffs, with which the portraits of Elizabeth and her courtiers have made everybody familiar. These were often set upon a frame of wire and edged with the

richest point-lace; nor without their bravery did any gallant think himself complete. Thus, in Ben Jonson’s ‘*Alchemist*,’ Lovewit says to Surly,

‘Good faith now, she does blame you extremely,
and says,
You swore, and told her you had taken the
pains
To dye your beard, and umbre o’er your face,
Borrowed a suit and ruff, all for her love.’

Mrs. Anne Turner, a woman of splendid beauty but abandoned character, introduced, in the reign of James I., the fashion of yellow starched ruffs, and for a time these were all the vogue. But Mrs. Turner having compassed, with Sir Robert Carr and Frances Howard, Countess of Somerset, the foul murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, and being sentenced to death by Lord Chief Justice Coke, he ordered that ‘as she was the person who had brought yellow starched ruffs into vogue, she should be hanged in that dress, that the same might end in shame and detestation.’ The strange order was carried out, and Mrs. Turner was hung at Tyburn in yellow ruffs, the hangman being similarly decorated. The fashion straightway sank into disrepute.

‘Yellow’ was certainly a favourite colour with our ancestors, and it is the hue generally attributed to the tresses of their lady-loves by the mediæval poets. When wigs first came into fashion they were all flaxen, for the light-complexioned, sanguine Franks could not affect the raven tresses of the ‘swarthy beauties’ of Spain or Italy. Most of our early queens had yellow hair; Elizabeth Woodville’s streamed down her back ‘a shower of rippled gold.’ Queen Elizabeth had yellow hair—with, perhaps, a suspicion of red about it—and the ladies of her Court accordingly dyed their hair of the royal colour—an instance of loyalty which now-a-days would astonish even the enthusiastic admirers of the fair Princess Alexandra. The readers of our Elizabethan dramatists do not need to be reminded of their numerous allusions to tawny and orange velvets, and satins shimmering with golden lustre. In ‘*Every Man out of his*

Humour *Fungoso* wears a 'pink'd yellow doublet.' In 'Cynthia's Revels' *Amorphus* describes his mistress as ribanded in green and yellow.

Silk stockings came into use in England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, under circumstances which Stowe describes with his usual quaintness:—'In the second yeere of Queen Elizabeth,' he says, 'her silk woman, Mistris Montague, presented her majestie for a new yeere's gift, a pair of black knit silk stockings, the which, after a few days' wearing, pleased her highness so well, that she sent for Mistris Montague, and asked her where she had them, and if she could help her to any more; she answered, saying, "I made them very carefully, of purpose only for your majestie, and seeing these please you so well, I will presently set more in hand." "Do so" (quoth the queene), "for indeed I like silk stockings so well, because they are pleasant, fine, and delicate, that henceforth I will wear no more cloth stockings"—and from that time unto her death the queene never wore any more cloth hose, but only silke stockings;* for you shall understand that King Henry the Eighth did weare only cloath hose, or hose cut out of ell-broade taffety; or that by great chance there came a pair of Spanish silk stockings from Spain. King Edward the Sixth had a payre of long Spanish silk stockings sent him for a great present.'

The variations in the matter of the beard have been astounding. At one time it has streamed like a meteor from the lip and chin; at another the chin has showed like a stubble-land at harvest-home. The Normans did not encourage the hirsute appendage, but among the French it was held in great esteem; and when Louis VII., in compliance with the exhortations of his bishops, curtailed his long locks and shaved off his beard, he unwittingly got rid of his wife, for Eleanor, dis-

* In James I.'s reign, the gallants would wear their woollen stockings in the country, and, as Stephen says, in 'Every Man in his Humour,' 'have a pair of silk against winter,' that they went 'to dwell in the town.'

gusted with his effeminate appearance, took the law into her own hands and soon provided her husband with sufficient grounds for a divorce; whereupon she married Henry II. (then Count of Anjou), and bringing him as her dowry the rich provinces of Guienne and Poitou, stirred up the long wars between France and England that endured for three centuries of bloodshed. The beard came into fashion again in the reign of Henry VIII., who wore it short and round, but closely cropped his hair. The introduction of Spanish fashions with the introduction of a Spanish husband to Queen Mary lengthened the beard, and encouraged the growth of those long locks which give so noble an appearance to our Elizabethan worthies. The moustache, at the same time, grew in favour, either curled round each side of the mouth in the shape of a crescent, or worn thick and bushy upon the lip, or drawn out into thin spiral ends like that of Napoleon III. An old poet says of one of his heroes—

'He'll borrow money on the stroke of his beard,
Or turn of his mustaccio!'

The beard was usually worn peaked, like an inverted pyramid, as you will see it in Vandyck's and Zuccherò's portraits;* but in Charles II.'s reign it began to give place to a sleek and bushy 'imperial,' or 'tuft,' which in due time vanished altogether, leaving the chin once more free from hair. This latter fashion prevailed for upwards of a century, whiskers being the only adornment of the face; but within the last few years the moustache and the beard have again sprung into a notable popularity, and are countenanced, we are told, on 'physiological principles.' The beard protects the throat, the moustache the lips—the latter a natural 'respirator,' whose advantages should be shown by a decrease in bronchial affections. Both, however, have fought a hard fight with prejudice, and especially has the moustache run the gauntlet of every little wit. It was 'snobbish,'

* Like the beard of Hudibras,

'In cut and dye so like a tile,

A sudden view it would beguile.'

'coxcombical,' 'unmanly,' 'outlandish.' Certainly on the lips of quiet city clerks and pallid shopmen it loses its grace and fitness, but the gentleman and the soldier may well be content to wear it, if there be any truth in the dictum of a writer on education in the seventeenth century: 'I have a favourable opinion,' he says, 'of that young gentleman who is curious in fine mustachios. The time he employs in adjusting, dressing, and curling them is no lost time, for the more he contemplates his mustachios, the more his mind will cherish and be animated by masculine and courageous notions!' Which admirable axiom I commend to the consideration of the Volunteers of England.

Certain revelations anent a certain Madame Rachel have made known to the curious public that the art of beautifying beauty—gilding refined gold and painting the lily—is not yet extinct, and that women of fashion can still be found to disgrace themselves with enamel and the use or abuse of half a hundred filthy cosmetics. But these are hardly likely to revive the mania for pomades, perfumes, oils, tinctures, and quintessences which possessed the ladies of the sixteenth century. The roses and lilies, which the old poets praised in their mistresses, were but painted daubs after all. A lady's toilet was a complete system of painting, essencing, and bathing. Ben Jonson thus details the process:—

'To-morrow morning

I'll send you a perfume, first to resolve
And procure sweat, and then prepare a bath
To cleanse and clear the cutis; against when
I'll have an excellent new facus made,
Resistive 'gainst the sun, the rain, or wind,
Which you shall lay on with a breath, or oil,
As you best like, and last some fourteen hours.'

Ninon de L'Enclos, the famous French beauty, like Poppæa, the mistress of Nero, is said to have preserved her loveliness unimpaired to a mature age by the daily use of a bath of asses' milk. The fair Queen of Scots bathed in wine; and the Earl of Shrewsbury, when acting as her custodian, complained bitterly of the expense she entailed upon him by this luxurious custom. It

was white wine the ladies thus employed for the purposes of the toilet, and it was mainly used by those of 'a certain age,' who desired to remove their wrinkles: young beauty contented itself with a bath of milk. Did the effeminate Clarence bathe in wine, and was King Edward's order that he should suffer death by drowning in a butt of Malvoisie a cruel satire on his womanish weakness? According to Strutt, if you wish to obtain a bright and sanguine complexion, you must first use a hot bath until you perspire, and then wash the face with wine until you become marvellously fair and ruddy.

A wine-bath was assuredly much to be preferred to the flesh of capons fed with vipers, by which the beautiful Venetia Digby, wife of the eccentric Sir Kenelm, endeavoured to improve her complexion. Sir Kenelm is also supposed to have made his lady feed upon the great snail, or *helix pomatia*, washing down the unsavory repast with a draught of viper-wine, for the preservation of her beauty. No wonder that she died in her thirty-third year, and that only 'a small quantity of brains' was found in her head! Ladies in those days, and down to the reign of the second George, ornamented—or disfigured—their faces with an abundance of black patches, which they cut in the most fantastic forms—owls, rings, suns, moons, crowns, stars, crosses, and even a coach and horses. The widow in 'Hudibras' refers to this grotesque fashion—

'She that with poetry is won

Is but a desk to write upon;
Some with Arabian spices strive
T'embalm her cruelly alive;
Or season her, as French cooks use
Their *haut-gouts*, *bouillies*, or *ragouts*;
Others make posies of her cheeks,
Where red and whitest colours mix;
In which the lily and the rose
For Indian lake and ceruse goe.
The sun and moon, by her bright eyes,
Eclipse'd and darken'd in the skies,
Are but black patches that she wears,
Cut into suns, and moons, and stars.'

A curious story anent these patches is told by the Sir Kenelm Digby already referred to. A young wife of his acquaintance having given way to this reprehensible practice, he considered it his duty to remonstrate

with her. 'Have you no apprehension,' he said, 'that your child may be born with half moons upon its face; or rather, that all those black patches may assemble in one and appear in the middle of its forehead?' This lecture was not without effect, but the mischief was partly done, and the lady's child was actually born with a mark on her forehead as large 'as a crown of gold.'

Of these and other mysterious additions to a beauty's toilet Pope has made exquisite use in 'The Rape of the Lock':—

'And now, unveiled, the toilet stands displayed,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid;
First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,
With head uncovered, the cosmetic powers,
A heavenly image in the glass appears;
To that she bends, to that her eye she rears;
The inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.
Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here
The various offerings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the goddess with the glittering spoil.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box;
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
'Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white.

Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux.'

Patches came into England with Charles II.; and his sister, Henrietta of Orleans, who had learned the art in Paris, was the first to wear them in public. The fashion instantly spread. Even Pepys — gossiping but shrewd old Pepys—allowed his wife to adopt it. 'The Princess Henrietta is very pretty,' he says, 'but my wife, standing near her, with two or three black patches on, and well dressed, seems to me much handsomer than she.' Which I take to be a very proper conclusion on the part of Master Pepys. These patches were so arranged as to attract the eye to what was considered the best feature of the face. Happy the beauty who boasted of a dimple, a becoming smile, or a rosy bloom! The patches, like finger-posts, indicated its position and fascination to the admiring observer.

According to an anecdote related by the learned author of the 'Britannia,' there existed among our ancestors as absurd an imitation of the dress and habits of the great as

the little minds of our own day are prone to affect. 'Sir Philip Calthorp,' he says, 'purged John Drakes, the shoemaker of Norwich, in the time of King Henry VIII., of the proud humour which our people have to be of the gentleman's cut. This knight bought on a time as much fine French tawny cloth as should make him a gown, and sent it to the taylor's to be made. John Drakes, a shoemaker of that town, coming to this said taylor's, and seeing the knight's gown-cloth lying there, liking it well, caused the taylor to buy him as much of the same cloth and price to the same intent, and further bade him to make it of the same fashion that the knight would have his made of. Not long after the knight, coming to the taylor's to take measure of his gown, perceiving the like cloth lying there, asked of the taylor whose it was. Quoth the taylor, it is John Drakes', the shoemaker, who will have it made of the self-same fashion that yours is made of! "Well," said the knight, "in good truce be it. I will have mine made as full of cuts as thy shears can make it." "It shall be done," said the taylor; whereupon, because the time drew near, he made haste to finish both their garments. John Drakes had no time to go to the taylor's till Christmas Day, for serving his customers, when he hoped to have worn his gown. Perceiving the same to be full of cuts, began to swear at the taylor, for the making his gown after that sort. "I have done nothing," quoth the taylor, "but that you bid me; for as Sir Philip Calthorp's is, even so I have made yours." "By my latchet," quoth John Drakes, "I will never wear gentlemen's fashions again."

A signal illustration of the cyclical character of fashion—of its tendency to repeat itself—is afforded by the expansive 'crinolines' which so excite the horror of Dr. Lankester, and stimulate the humorous fancy of John Leech. 'There is nothing new under the sun,' not even hoops! Pope speaks of 'the sevenfold fence'—

'Stiff with hoops, and armed with ribs of whale;'

But our modern fair ones have im-

proved upon the devices of their fore-mothers and use light bands of steel, which are not only expansive but compressible. The extravagant amplitude in which the leaders of the mode indulged some few months ago was not, however, more offensive than the indecorous scantiness of attire affected by the beauties of the second George's reign, when the waist was pushed up to the very arm-pits, and tight, close-fitting habiliments revealed without improving the female figure. Fancy a damsel thus attired, with an old Oldenburg bonnet thrusting out its peak a foot or two before her, half-a-dozen patches upon her face, her hair powdered and frizzled, her shoes red, with enormously high heels; and to her, as the old play-books say, let there enter a 'buck' or 'macaroni,' in a coat of light green, with sleeves too small for the arms, and buttons too big for the sleeves, a pair of tight Manchester stiff breeches, clouded silk stockings, hair drawn back from the forehead, plastered, powdered, and pendant behind in a long queue, and the whole surmounted by a hat too small to cover one's head, and too large to put in one's pocket. You have then an *à-la-mode* Strephon and Chloris, fit to warble the melodies of Della Cruscan poets and languish over the inanities of the novels of the Minerva press.

The skirt and petticoat first became aggressive and exuberant in the reign of that imperious *arbiter elegantiarum*, Queen Elizabeth, who appears to have thought it necessary, in her character of the Virgin Queen, to keep off the male sex by a *noli-me-tangere* fence of whalebone—the vardingale or farthingale of the old dramatic poets. It is worth while, perhaps, to endeavour to realize to ourselves a portrait of an Elizabethan belle. The hair then is either curled, frizzled, or crisped to a portentous height, and lest the wonderful work of art should topple, is supported with a fabric of wire, ornamented with curiously-wrought wreaths of gold or silver, while upon the top of the 'stately turret' stands a French hood, hat, or kerchief, probably of velvet. Our Amoret or Sacharissa has also a silk scarf cast

about her face, and fluttering in the wind, with lappets of gold or silver at each end, and when she rides abroad conceals her beauty from the curious gaze by a mask of velvet, with holes in it, whence the radiant eyes dart swift and sunny glances. A pocket looking-glass hangs at her side, and a fan is clasped in fingers loaded with precious stones; the fair soft wrists also gleaming with lambent pearl or flashing diamond, and golden rings falling from the delicate ears. Round the snowy neck protrudes an enormous four-fold ruff, of lawn, 'stiffened,' and made 'inflexible' with the new invention—starch, and, moreover, 'a certain device made of wires, crested for the purpose, and whipped all over either with gold thread, silver, or silk.' From the half-revealed bosom descends a long protracted stomacher, on each side of which horizontally projects the enormous whalebone farthingale. As for the gown—how shall the pen of a writer unlearned in the language of millinery describe it? Is it of silk, stiff as buckram? Of grogram or taffeta? Is it not overwhelmed with broad bands of lace, with sleeves low-trailing to the ground, and fluttering with love-knots of yellow ribbon? The petticoat is silken, and fringed about the skirts, and the stockings, at which we venture to permit ourselves a cursory glance, are of the newly-introduced kind patronized by her Majesty, of knitted silk,* and purchased, we dare be sworn, of Master Thomas Burdet, at the foot of London Bridge, opposite the church of St. Magnus. Lastly, the dainty foot of our ideal beauty is encased in pantoufles of yellow velvet, 'stitched with silk, and embroidered with gold and silver all over the foot, with other gewgaws innumerable.'

The farthingale continued popular throughout the reign of James I.; and a curious story is told of Lady Wych, who accompanied her husband, Sir Thomas Wych, on his embassy to the Grand Signor. The

* We suppose our imaginary belle to have flourished about 1580. Twenty years later William Lee, of St. John's College, Cambridge, invented the stocking-frame.

Sultana received her at a private interview. Lady Wych and her attendants all appeared in protuberant farthingales, whereat the astonished and loose-zoned Sultana inquired if that extension of the hips was the natural peculiarity of an English-woman's figure, and it cost Lady Wych no little trouble to unfold the mystery. In the troublous times of Charles I. the farthingale still maintained its pride of place,

'Now calls she for a bolsterous fardingal;'

but towards the close of the Protectorate it began to decrease in size and offensiveness. The ruffs also disappeared, and the hair fell in long curls upon the exposed shoulders. Free manners and loose morals necessitated loosely-flowing robes and ringlets floating to the breeze. With the more decorous habits of the court of William and Mary returned a more decorous style of dress. The white round arm was hidden in a tight sleeve, the bosom veiled by the intrusive stomacher, and the farthingale assumed something of its pristine rotundity. The gown and petticoat were so covered with flounce and furbelow that Addison compared a lady of fashion to 'one of those animals which in the country we call a Friezland hen.'

The hooped petticoat rose upon the startled town about 1711, and at once swelled out to an extraordinary amplitude of dimensions. Sir Roger de Coverley declares that 'the ladies now walk as if they were in a go-cart.' It maintained its size, but

sometimes changed its fashion, for several generations. In 1735 it projected all round, so that the figure seemed to rise above a semi-cone; ten years later it diminished in front but extended at the sides, and in 1760 it returned to the shape of the Elizabethan farthingale. It met with a formidable enemy, however, in George Prince Regent, and under his severe frowns sank speedily into nothingness, to be revived by the luxurious taste of the court of Eugénie of France.

Such have been some of the curiosities of fashion in the matter of dress. And here we pause in our enumeration, not from lack of material, for a goodly folio might easily be compiled on a subject of such infinite variety, but because we have reached the end of our tether. Our notes have been desultory, but not wholly valueless, if our lady readers shall learn from their suggestiveness the folly and bad taste of extremes, and, pondering upon the absurdities of their grandmothers (and themselves), take to heart the admirable counsel of rare Ben Jonson:—

'Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powder'd, still perfum'd:
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

'Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all the adulteries of art:
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.'



A PLEA FOR IDLE PEOPLE.

BY OUR LAZY CONTRIBUTOR.

IN times when controversial hair-splitting was more the fashion than it is now, it was a favourite subject of dispute amongst learned men whether when a man said 'I lie' there was the greater reason to suppose that he really did lie, or that he spoke the truth. If he lied, it was argued, then he spoke the truth, for that was what he said he did. Yet, again, if he spoke the truth, how could he lie? And so the sages spun their problem round and round, as squirrels spin their cages, without ever coming any nearer to a satisfactory conclusion.

A discussion almost as interesting, and quite as profitable, might be maintained on the question, whether a man who writes a 'Plea for Idle People' is himself, *ipso facto*, a lazy fellow. That he writes an essay at all is certainly an argument in favour of his industry; but that he writes in praise of laziness should have equal weight in the opposite scale. And so far as I am concerned I have only to adduce one fact for the consideration of the reader, and thereupon confidently leave my case to the candid judgment of all people competent to form an opinion.

The fact is, that I began the present essay some time ago that certain lines with which it opened, descriptive of the season of the year at which it was written, are now so preposterously unseasonable that I could only expect the editor to publish them in case I should have the rare good fortune to catch him in a state of temporary aberration of mind.

I wrote of budding primrose and violets. I wrote that the crocus and snowdrop were *fading away*; that the daffodil had come 'before the swallow dared'; that the flowering currant-bushes were red; that the hedgerows were bursting into leaf; that the lambs were bleating; that I heard the cawing of the early rook; that it was 'a very fine day,

considering it was yet March.' And now when I have filled my allotted pages, the name of the month is one which I positively dare not mention. I am compelled either to reconstruct my essay, or let it wait till another spring arrives to fit it.

And although it must be evident enough from this circumstance that I am the writer preordained to treat upon this subject of laziness, I confess that even to me there is something sternly reproachful in this silent, eternal round of the seasons. When I consider how the unwearied earth (which we call soulless) still performs its works of good, I seem almost to hear it asking, 'How is it that you mortals (who flatter yourselves that you are not soulless) do not more closely copy your great mother? How is it that you also are not ever prompt and ready for your tasks again, after your allotted seasons of rest? Do I ever miss a year? Do I ever make excuses? Do I ever postpone the potatoes because "suffering from severe cold?" Whilst you, how prone you are to shirking; how you magnify your headaches; how inopportunately you sprain your ankles when you ought to make some not very agreeable journey; how singularly your rheumatisms develop towards church-time; how, if you have a restless hour or two in the night, you declare you have "never slept a wink;" in short, how you play the old soldier, nearly every man of you, if you would only own it.'

Instead, however, of pursuing these reflections, or attempting to repel these accusations, I confess that I am absolutely void of excuse for keeping this paper so long in hand, as, after all, it is only a report of conversation, and of what rose out of it months ago.

How I came to write of laziness at all, instead of merely practising it, was thus:—

On an afternoon in early summer I

was reading aloud one of the most exquisite essays of 'Friends in Council' to my cousins Frank and Aleck, who were staying with me then, when, to my considerable irritation, Frank interrupted me by asking, 'Don't you find it a great bore?'

'A bore!' I replied. 'How?'

'I mean, don't you find it a bore to read such essays as that, and contrast them with your own immortal productions?'

We laughed; and when I had finished the essay, we began talking about some passage in it in praise of steady industry, and by-and-by we found that, starting from earnest talk of this nature, our conversation had veered round, as conversation strangely does drift and veer, until we had got to gossip and badinage of a very opposite kind.

Said Frank, 'We will resolve *ourselves* into a committee of "Friends in Council," and the subject on which we will hold council shall be "The Advantages of Laziness." Our friend Fainéant there' (it was I whom he had dubbed Fainéant) 'shall report our conversation, and to-morrow evening he shall be bound to produce an essay on the subject, under penalty of listening to one which I have a great mind to produce myself in case he fails.'

Egomét. When a man says he has 'a great mind' to do a thing, I generally understand him to mean that his 'great mind' is still more set on leaving it alone; so there is not much chance, I think, of our hearing Frank's essay.

We had strolled out of the house, and seated ourselves on one of the lock-gates of a canal which flows near. A boat, drawn by two donkeys, laden with salt from Droitwich, had just come up, and was passing through the lock.

Aleck. I have been reading in old Camden this very morning about Droitwich. He says the Romans called it *Salinæ*. Two of their great roads—the one running from the sea-coast of Lincolnshire, the other from that of Hampshire—met there, and were known through all their courses, the first as the Upper

Salt Way, and the other as the Second Salt Way. What an indication of the importance of the place, that two imperial roads should be known only as ways to the town from whence the salt came!* I wonder how many millions of tons of the condiment have come from the same place between then and now.

Frank (to boatman). Where are you going with the salt?

Boatman. To London.

Frank. And how long does it take you to go from Droitwich to London?

Boatman. About eight days. Gee, then! (And off he went.)

Frank. I declare I find something positively refreshing in that. To think that in these days of high pressure and mad tearing-about, here is actually a conveyance into which I can step, and which, though scarcely ever stopping, save for a few hours' rest at night, will be a full week in carrying me out of Warwickshire into London. And the donkeys go through with him, I suppose?

Egomét. Ay! they would find their way there and back without him.

Frank. Now, Aleck—you know everything—why is it that they use two donkeys instead of one horse?

Aleck. I don't know quite everything, though I confess I do very nearly. The two principal things of which I am unfortunately ignorant happen to be crochet and the philosophy of boating by donkeys.

Egomét. Then I will explain. Two donkeys are found better and cheaper than one horse, because not only do they do more work, but

* I looked at the 'Britannia' when we went in again, and find Camden is of opinion that the whole county of Worcester, with its inhabitants (called anciently the *Wiccii*), took its name from these salt springs of Wich, or Droit-wich:—

'If I should say,' he writes, 'that Richard de la Wich, bishop of Chichester, who was born here, did by his prayers obtain these salt springs, I am afraid some would censure me as very injurious to the Divine Providence, and over-credulous of old wives' fables.'

I am afraid so too, Mr. Camden.

they live a great deal by their wits.

Frank. Ah! I see. Poor Jack yonder, I have no doubt, has a personal and critical knowledge of every thistle between here and London; knows exactly which he would like best, and which there is the most chance of his getting. I vow that the first fortnight I have to spare I will make this voyage with Jack, and help him to a few of the choicest.

Egomel. I warn you, however, that at present you will find the passenger-traffic on canals to be about at its minimum. I saw, not long ago, an extract from an old number of the 'Times,' congratulating the nation that by means of the canals then recently completed, troops had been, and could be, conveyed, in cases of emergency, by relays of boat-horses, from Paddington to the Mersey in (I think it said) about five days; and now, I suppose, the War Department would expect the distance to be accomplished in about five hours.

Aleck. What a tear and wear it is! What a contrast to the peaceful gliding of yonder boat that is just passing out of sight!

Frank. Now, Solomon, here's another problem for you. If Horace's rustic (of whom you may have read in the Latin grammar), sitting by the rapid river, waiting for it all to pass, had a prospect of remaining in session so long, how long would he have had to wait here on a similar business?

Aleck. Seeing that a canal does not flow at all, I suspect that even that dullest of all dullards, as (saving your presence) I think he surely must have been, would have found himself unequal to the duty, unless you had joined him in the sederunt.

Egomel. I beg your pardon, but your wisdom is at fault again. Theoretically, of course, a canal does not flow, or there would soon be an end of it; but practically no lock-gate is absolutely water-tight, and if only a pint goes through, the whole body of water behind must come forward to replace it; in proof of which, yon cork, on which I have had my eye ever since we came, is

now, I calculate, a full inch nearer than when we took our seats.

Aleck. Oh, well, then, I don't mind waiting if you have plenty of cigars.

Egomel. But I do, as we have no drags at hand, and Frank is rolling about on that gate in a way that is positively dangerous.

Frank (hauling up a bootful of water, one leg having gone in up to the knee). That will do for me. I have had enough. Let us go into a land of dry stockings.

Accordingly we went home again, and Frank having been made comfortable about the feet, went back to his absurd idea of making me write an essay for the next night.

'You must let us know,' said he, 'under what circumstances you think laziness most enjoyable — when a man has little or nothing to do, or when he is neglecting his work.'

Aleck. To be lazy when there is little or nothing to do is a mistake: there is nothing adds so much to the luxury of it as the fact that there is a good deal of work waiting for you. To be lazy when your desk is up-heaped with letters that want answering, when there are fifty jobs in fifty places soliciting your attention, then is the time.

Frank. You must not forget also to keep up a good distinction between rest and laziness, between mere fatigue and the disinclination to fatigue one's self. Rest, of course, involves precedent labour. A man who never works (if there be such a man), never rests. Rest, in fact, to the worker is one of the great necessities of existence, while laziness is only one of its great luxuries.

And so at last, after a little more banter, I was induced to promise and to write the following production, which I brought in on the following night, and which they dignified with the name of 'Essay.' Beginning it as a joke, I found before I had written long that I had changed from jest to earnest, and I ended it abruptly for fear of being coughed down by my audience:—

* * * * *

'There is a proverb about two men, one of whom tried to get milk from a he-goat while the other held a sieve to catch it. When one looks back at one's past labours much of our industry seems to have been directed about as profitably as that of these honest but injudicious fellows. To yourselves, in the pains you have been at to get this essay, the application of the proverb is palpable enough. I wish my own trouble in writing it may prove to have been any better spent than yours.

'I imagine that you have set me to sing the praises of laziness as being the most tantalizing labour to which one idle man could put another. I imagine too that you have been incited to this cruel thing by remembrance of the Lucretian maxim, 'Suave mari magno;' but let me solemnly remind you that however you may indulge in self-congratulation at sight of a brother floundering in the ocean of dullness, my pitiable case ought to be felt as a practical reproach of your own inertness, and to serve as a painful memento of what you may yourselves come to on the morrow. In any case view my troubles with respect and pity. The sight of a great man struggling in adversity has been in all ages an object of admiration to gods and men.'

'Hear, hear!' from Frank.

'You charged me last night to tell you under what circumstances the idle mood was most delightful. I pronounce no opinion. Sweet as it is at all times, how could I say at what particular time it is sweetest? I only think that whenever it is most improper it is then that we seem most prone to it; and in this we seem to be kept in countenance by the very greatest and oldest examples. You remember that the ancient poets, however much they make the deities of Olympus delight to show their power over the affairs of men, always make them still less forgetful of the delight of *doing nothing*. They never "lie beside their nectar," up in their wonderful cloud-land, with half so much enjoyment as when their interference is most wanted on earth. There as

they lie, there are armies in conflict down below; there are lands famine-stricken; cities swallowed up by earthquakes; there are murder and robbery; there are shrieks, and prayers, and curses: Jove's interposition and attention is wanted by mortals in a thousand ways at once. No matter. *Dolce far niente*.

"In feasts everlasting,
Around the gold tables,
Still dwell the immortals."

Speaking, however, for myself only, and not at all for the immortals, I find scarcely any of the joys of laziness so great as that of leaving the imagination to its play in the employment known as "castle-building." To me as a man given to scribbling I find that my lazy days are in this way, above all others, my grand days for finishing old essays, dashing off new ones, writing books far above the dignity of essay, and for reading all the books "without which no gentleman's library is complete." With writing-desk at a safe distance I resolve at such times that I will at once write my essays upon "Things generally known" and "Things not worth knowing;" that I will lay down the laws of the "Whole Art of Plagiarism;" that I will write a book to accompany my title-page of the "Lives of the Principal Gold Sticks-in-Waiting;" that I will complete my tragedies of "Boadicea" and "Oliver Cromwell;" in short, that I will blockade all the London theatres with plays, all the editors with essays, and Paternoster Row with cart-loads of manuscripts.

'As for reading, it is astounding with what facility I dispose of an entire library when in a properly sanguine mood, and the volumes are conveniently out of reach. I have read this very afternoon the whole of the historical works of Dr. Robertson, the whole of Sir Archibald Alison's ditto, Sir Walter Scott's "Life of Napoleon," the works of Flavius Josephus (that learned Jew), an entire set of the old English Dramatists, Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," Locke on the "Human Understanding," Bacon's "Novum Organon," Milton's prose writings—I don't know what be-

side; and I assure you I have found them very nice, light reading, and am not in the least fatigued.

As to the extent of paving which I have furnished, at the same time, to a place we know of, I fear it might probably be put down as enough for a considerable street; for I have to confess that this delight of castle-building is not without its drawbacks. When I revert to the past, and survey old labours really undergone, and old tasks really accomplished, I am bound to say that they do not bear comparison with these facile performances which I have just chronicled. All the glory vanishes as rudely as that vision of Alnaschar's in the "Arabian Nights:" he did but touch the basket with his foot, but gone was the grand vizier's daughter, gone the troop of bowing slaves, gone the wonderful wealth—there was nothing remaining but a litter of broken glass, and a poor dreaming fool staring at it. So I but glance at the stern realities of the present, but touch for an instant the poor performances of the past, and all these wonderful new writings of mine have faded away; all these wonderful readings are forgotten: there is nothing left but poor fragments of unfinished essays, poor broken memories of half-read books, poor shards of vows that are unfulfilled, poor traces of studies carried to no end, poor smatterings of knowledge that is but ignorance disguised—a poor thriftless Alnaschar, with his fame yet to earn, and his vizier's daughter yet to win.

'Turning, however, from these dreams unrealized, I try to find some consolation in thinking that perhaps the tasks which are undone are after all not worth doing. How much of what we really have done seems in the retrospect unprofitable! Perhaps these things would be so too. How much that we have succeeded in attaining has disappointed our expectations! How much of rubbish we have been obliged to take with all of good! How much that we learned with toil and pain has been of no use! In the drudgery of learning languages, for instance, how we torture

our brains and memories for weary hours and weeks and months to gain knowledge which is at last only means to an end. A man *ought* to find in Greek and Latin literature a great deal of delight to repay him for what he has passed through in mastering hic, hæc, hoc, and ó, ñ, τὸ, declensions, conjugations, moods, tenses, first and second aorists. What a quantity of surplusage we have to take with what we really want! When I buy a bread-loaf I should think it hard to have always to take and pay for a peck of bran along with it; yet I have at different times and with infinite pains been compelled to learn, in at least three continental languages, how to ask a man such questions as "Do you want a velvet coat?" "Have you hurt your shoulder?" "Do you take care of your grandmother?" "Do you require any buttons?" with the corresponding answers, "I do, or I do not want a velvet coat," "I have, or I have not hurt my shoulder," &c. &c. Now it is years since I learned those questions, and I have never yet met with a man whom I had any reasonable ground for supposing to be in want of a velvet coat, or to have hurt his shoulder, or to be neglecting his grandmother, or to be short of buttons. I begin to think that to the end of my days I may remain charged with those inquiries, and never get them let off in any language whatever. I have learned, it is true, to read a little of Molière, and Cervantes, and Dante, but I should like to have an opportunity of asking these and a thousand more such questions with which I was loaded, and so be once for all well rid of them.

'And if we come to labour that we call more peculiarly our own—labour of production instead of labour of acquirement—if we look at the work of our own hands, or the fruit of our own brains, what is there of it all that satisfies us? No one knows so well as we know the defects of our own workmanship. No one knows so well as the cabinet-maker how imperfectly dove-tailed are those fittings. No

one knows so well as the smith that he could not get his fire to the proper heat, and that such and such a welding is likely to be heard of again unpleasantly. The most captious member of the congregation does not see so well as the clergyman the defects and poverty of the sermon. The hardest critic is perhaps not so dissatisfied with the poem as the poet himself. No reader sees so well as the essayist the flaws in his arguments, or knows how painfully he has tried to mend them. No one is so contemptuous of "drollery," or sees its dreariness so clearly, as the writer who has committed it to print comes, it may be himself, to see it by-and-by. The most stuck-up young gentleman at the pantomime probably has not so poor an opinion of the tricks of clown and harlequin as that which these poor people entertain themselves.

'So it is for the most part that, when we look into the past, the retrospect is not always a cheerful one, and that we find too often that neither toil of head nor hands that we have undergone is cause of unmixed satisfaction to us, if, indeed, of any satisfaction at all.

'It is an old subject of argument—the comparative advantages of an active life and a contemplative one. Let them discuss it again who choose; I do not enter on it. But it is very significant; how much of the highest praise we mortals give to each other is of a negative kind. We say of him who acquits himself best,—“He lives a blameless life.” It is by no means necessary that great deeds should be done in order to reach the springs of our gratitude and love. So prone are we all to do that which is evil, that when we see those who are intrusted with great power, simply abstain from doing the wrong they might do, then we say that even in this their not doing, they have nobly done. When we look back into history, how often do we find that those kings whose memories have been most dearly cherished, are those that occupy the least space in their country's annals! Not for the great things they did, but for the evil they did not do, were

they thus beloved. Well for a king if he go down to posterity with no worse a nickname than “Fainéant.”

'God save your Majesty,' said Frank.

“What profit,” asks the preacher, who was king also—“what profit hath a man of all his labour that he taketh under the sun?”

'And again and again he returns to this text, “What hath man of all his labour and of the vexation of his heart wherein he hath laboured under the sun?”

“I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do, and behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit.”

“All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.”

“All things are full of labour.”

“In much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.”

“I have seen all the works that are done under the sun and behold all is vanity.”

“There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good.”

'Similarly in this book of “Ecclesiastes,” as in the “Proverbs,” as in the apocryphal “Wisdom of Solomon,” (which, whoever wrote it, is worthy of the name it bears,) you see always that the writer was one who “looked before and after,” was not one-sided but many-sided, and that they who have been accounted wisest are they who have come to the fewest decisions. The key-note of “Ecclesiastes” lies in this deep inner conviction of the unprofitableness of worldly labour. Again and again the writer strives to overcome his despondency—to change the key for a nobler one. Yet he never succeeds for long together. However higher the notes that he strikes sometimes, he lapses back again, as it were unconsciously, to his wailings; and when at last he says, abruptly, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter,” we feel that the conclusion he puts before us is not the one that he has worked

up to, not the conclusion that is most in the spirit of his book, but only that which he wishes to inculcate in spite of all that in the glimmering light has seemed to him to be against it. It is faith surviving even in doubt and through doubt. It is another illustration of this truth, but little comprehended:

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

It is he whom we call the wisest of men admitting at last the powerlessness of his reason, and stretching out "lame hands of faith" to grasp the hope to which he clings.

'And now, as I find I have myself changed my key—have somehow assumed a graver tone than that which I intended to adopt in this idle trifle—as I find myself, instead of boasting of laziness and extolling it, begin to apologize and find subtle excuses for it,—and as I did not and do not mean to sermonize, it is time for me to get back to these lower regions I have left, and make an end.

'Those graver thoughts have led me, as the more earnest of my thoughts so often do lead me, to Tennyson, and so I am reminded that I might have brought him, too, into that comparison I have just been making. The song of the "Lotos-Eaters" and their protest against the toil of "ever climbing up the climbing wave," what is it again but the protest of Solomon?—a song, indeed, as old as human nature and human speech—a song that we all sing untaught, though never till now in words so melodious. Surely I was right at first in making light of my laziness, and am wrong now in seeming to apologise for it.'

Frank. Well, it is fortunate we did not expect much, for assuredly we have not got it. But surely you might have had a word for poor Thomson, the apostle of laziness, the builder of this 'Castle of Indolence.' (He reached down the book as he spoke.) Here is a sentiment for you:—

'The best of men have ever loved repose;
They hate to mingle in the filthy fray.'

'But if,' he adds,—

'But if a little exercise you choose,
Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here.'

Mark the nice conditions on which exercise may be taken. It is 'not forbidden,' provided it be taken with a view to adding zest to subsequent laziness. And Thomson, we are told, took his 'little exercise' in the way of nibbling peaches as they grew on the tree while he kept both hands in his pockets. I dare say he wrote this book, if the truth were known, in bed, at hours after mid-day. What a poem might have been spoilt had he had any misgivings on the score of laziness! There was your man for an essay!

Aleck. I think, too, you might have wound up with that old story of Lamb going late to the office, though, of course, we all know it.

Frank. Of course we do.

Egommet. Of course we do.

Aleck. Never mind. I choose to tell it again. Lamb had gone very late to the office one morning, as, indeed, he often did. The chief clerk said, with dignity, 'Mr. Lamb, you really are much behind time this morning, and I notice that you come late habitually.' And Lamb pleaded, as a set off, that if he came late in the morning, it must be admitted that he always went away in good time in an afternoon.

This anecdote must be the delight of lazy people for ever. And your excuse for your essay must be of a similar nature to Lamb's. You took up the writing of it late and reluctant. You did not seem much to like it while you read it. But at any rate you did not make a long business of it. You have soon got through it, and now you can leave it, or put it in the fire.

Frank. And this is your parody of 'Friends in Council.' *Eheu, quantum mutatus ab illo.*

Egommet. *Eheu quantum mutatus, indeed.*

And so ended our 'Reading, and discourse thereon.'

OUR GRAND ARCHERY CONTEST.

OFTEN have I wished that I had the flowing pen and the nimble fingers of the ready writer, in order that I might either sing in heroic verse, after the manner of the old ballad-maker Homer, or relate in sober prose the mighty deeds accomplished by the strong right arms and the sure aim of our county Archery Society.

Vainly have I waited month after month, hoping to see some stirring lines anent this subject in the pages of 'London Society,' signed with the initials E. V., standing for 'Ethel Vere,' the young lady of our club who owns to writing poetry in the left-hand corner of the first column of the second page of our voluminous county paper, which corner is exclusively set apart by the enterprising editor to the contributions of 'Flora,' 'Nympha,' 'Ada,' 'Alphonso,' 'Lothario,' 'Byronian,' and other aspirants to literary fame. In despair I have turned over the pages of the celebrated serial before mentioned in hopes of having my eyes greeted by a graphic account of our doings from the pen of my friend the Rev. Tychicus Chasubel, our High Church and rather sporting curate, who, it is known, contributes, on the quiet, articles to the magazines, and who also bets divers pairs of gloves on the Derby, to the great scandal of some of his weaker brethren, or rather sisters, in the shape of some antiquated spinsters of his flock, of a truly serious turn of mind. In despair, I say, I have looked for this worthy's contribution, telling of our noble struggle, and gallant victory; but still has my cry been, 'Where, and oh where?' As nobody, then, has been found to undertake this task, I am compelled, rather than that the deeds of my county men and women should be lost in obscurity and neglect, to sit down and record the pros and cons, the ins and outs, the ups and downs, the hits and misses, golds, reds, blues, blacks, whites, and even greens, in the shape of arrows in the grass of our great archery contest.

Our county is, or rather was, up to the time when it entered into the rather stuck-up, majestic, and empty head of one of our county magnates, the Lady Fanny Fantail, to establish our archery club, what might be termed, without any violent deviation from the truth, rather slow. True, we had the usual amount of dinner-parties, at which everything was cold (even the guests) but the ices; and for which you had to leave your own snug fireside on a winter's night, and drive ten miles to dine off badly-cooked and indigestible viands, with people you cared nothing about, and at whom you grumbled and growled like a bear with a sore head; and all this for the sake of society. There were, too, the county, hunt, and dispensary balls, at which you had the extreme felicity of seeing and even breathing the same atmosphere as the aristocracy of the county, who showed themselves then to their more democratic neighbours, and made full amends for such an unwonted piece of condescension by snubbing them well on every other occasion of meeting throughout the year. But spite of all this mild dissipation, spite of its being so highly respectable that the breath of scandal hardly ever stirred a human leaf amongst us, our county had the character of being rather triste. What, however, was still worse than this was that our young gentlemen, spite of the brilliant eyes and bright tresses of our belles, were somewhat backward in coming forward.

Well, then, such was the state of affairs with us, when it entered the august head of the Lady Fanny Fantail to get up (I believe that is the correct term) that archery society which has since so highly distinguished itself.

Doubtless the Lady Fanny, having several marriageable daughters, had groaned in secret over the Volunteer Movement, as stirring up so much patriotic ardour in the breasts of Young England that their minds,

filled with the idea of how 'dulce' and 'decorum' it was to 'mori' for their country, could contain at one and the same time no other sentiment. Doubtless, I say, her ladyship had grieved in private over this idiosyncrasy of England's youth until she at length hit upon the notable scheme of our Archery Society as a counter-irritant against this (to her) horrid military fever.

But be that as it may, suffice it to say the club was formed; and as the great ones of our county were not sufficiently numerous to furnish members enough to carry on the affair with spirit, we of the squirearchy were permitted to enrol our names amongst those of our more august neighbours. The worthy bishop of the diocese in which our county is situated has not set his episcopal countenance, like a distinguished brother on the bench, against either beards or barley; therefore cricket, archery, and such-like amusements are open to the clergy: consequently, many of the clerical body, who, as a rule, are invariably to be found where ladies do love to congregate, quickly joined a project which promised so much mild excitement and amusement, without any risk of there being anything objectionable even to the most fastidious of their people. My own impression is that the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Plumpsee himself was in his own episcopal person a secret member of our society, but I cannot call to mind having seen his name in the list of our club; certainly his wife, Mrs. Pompous, was one, and we had an archery meeting at his lordship's residence, Rockminster Castle, and a very pleasant one it was.

But I am wandering from my subject. Our society having been formed under the auspices of the Lady Fanny Fantail, we all began to practise in the most praiseworthy and enthusiastic manner. Well do I remember my own first and futile attempts: how I commenced by holding my bow to my chest, and its string in the air; how I then reversed the order of things; and finally, on being told my position was not that which the ancient

manuscripts give as the one adopted by either Walter Tyrrel or Robin Hood, I ended by driving my arrow deep into my toe, and by this accident laid myself up for a fortnight, during which time my companions stole a march upon me, and obtained a considerable start in proficiency in the noble science of archery. Sad indeed were the tales each one had to tell when I again joined their ranks to practise with the long-bow. Poor Johnson, whom nature had provided with a very long organ of smell, would never get that (to him) unruly member out of the way of the bowstring in his efforts to adopt the style recommended by Strutt in his 'Booke of Sportes' as the correct one; the consequences being that he ended by nearly taking two inches from his obtrusive proboscis upon the recoil of the string. Thompson, who was nearsighted, and wore spectacles, had shot Farmer Jones's fat pig, which was feeding in an adjacent field, at least three hundred yards from the target, for which inaccuracy of aim and vision he had to pay five pounds of the current coin of the realm; whilst Miss Primrose had nearly slain the gallant Captain Crasher—her arrow, after passing through his bran new and glossy beaver, pinned itself in a most ignominious manner to a neighbouring haystack. Rome, however, was not built in a day; no more is archery (save by that wonderful little urchin, Dan Cupid) to be learnt in four-and-twenty hours. Notwithstanding that mishaps and misadventures of various sorts attended our efforts to excel in 'ye fine old English pastime of ye longe bowe,' we at length began to exhibit, as we thought, a more than usual degree of proficiency in the art; and success in our case begetting conceit, and ambition following in its train, we sought about to find another club amongst the neighbouring counties, whose skill in the use of the ancient weapon might render it honourable for us to challenge them to a friendly contest.

The county of Heavylandshire, famous for its cows and its cider, is alike celebrated for the skill of the

members of its archery society. To these gallant toxophilites did we of the Blankshire Club then direct our attention; and in a solemn conclave of our members held at the 'Beans and Bacon Hotel' in our county town, it was unanimously agreed upon that we should send a challenge to our cow-breeding, cider-growing neighbours, to try the skill of our respective clubs with the long-bow and yard-arm shaft. Nothing could be more honourable to them as archers, more hospitable and polite as neighbours, than the prompt reception on the part of the Heavylandshire Club of our cartel to do battle for the glory of our respective counties. Not only was our challenge accepted, but an intimation was at the same time given by a leading member of the Heavylandshire Club that we should be expected to fight for the palm of victory not on our own native soil, but amidst the foreign orchards and pastures of Heavylandshire.

And thus came about the celebrated archery contest I am about to endeavour to describe.

Bright shone the sun, dancing its sparkling rays on the beautiful river Y——, as I looked from my bedroom window on the morning which ushered in the auspicious day of our great match. As I passed the keen-edged razor over the down upon my chin, which I mistook for a beard, I felt a degree of tremor seize my right hand, and a slight nervousness pervade my whole system, at the thoughts of the momentous events the next four-and-twenty hours might produce upon the hitherto unsullied glories of my native county, and also perhaps on the destiny of my own unworthy self; for, as a very tolerable toxophilite, I had been selected one of the twelve chosen gentlemen who, with a like number of the opposite sex, were with our strong arms and quick eyes 'to clap them in the clout at twelve score, and to carry a fore-hand shaft, a fourteen, and a fourteen and a half that would do a man's heart good to see'—that is, to prove our skill by obtaining a great number of golds, reds, and blues, for the honour of Blankshire. But

perhaps it was more the thoughts that the fair Geraldine Carrington would not only be on the ground to witness my prowess, but also actually engaged amidst the Heavylandshire ranks against me, that caused my razor to slip and inflict that minute gash upon my upper lip, which rendered it necessary for me to show that I did use razors by wearing a piece of sticking-plaster during the whole of the succeeding day. An evening spent in the fascinating society of the fair object of my devotion—for we were guests in the hospitable mansion of one of the Heavylandshire magnates, upon whose lawn the great match was to be shot—finished by a late sitting up with cigars and pool in the billiard-room of our worthy entertainer, was not a preparation much calculated to produce the steady aim and accuracy of vision which we were told was requisite to insure victory to our arms. But thanks to youth and a good constitution, the state of my nerves was sufficiently satisfactory by the time I descended to the breakfast-room, and had slipped into an unoccupied seat by the side of my enslaver, to cause me to be so occupied by my meal as to prevent my seeing the angry scowl and sullen looks of a clerical-looking young man, who soon after followed me into the room, or the conscious blush of half-annoyance and pleasure which mantled the cheek of the lovely Geraldine. A cigar and a stroll through the beautiful grounds of Standing Park, the mansion in which our party were domiciled, passed away the time until the hour arrived for the contest to begin. Plenty of time was afforded ere the exciting moment arrived when the bugles should summon us to arms, to give me an opportunity of describing the notables amongst the company who honoured our combat with their presence, and who now, one after the other, kept driving up under the noble portico of the mansion. The yellow chariot and four horses, with that raw-boned, hard-visaged little old dowager, sitting all alone, bolt upright, in the very middle of the back seat, as though John Thomas,

the tall footman in the rumble, had arranged her ladyship there by nothing less than a mathematical problem, is the property of the Lady Elizabeth Rent-roll, the ancient dame who occupies it, once the penniless daughter of a Scottish duke with a 'lang pedigree,' now the rich widow of an extremely silly, weak-minded English country gentleman, who, dying some years ago, left his wife a magnificent fortune for her life, which the old lady, with true Scotch canniness, knows well how to take care of, and lay up for her north-country relatives. Directly in her wake, drawn by four more horses glistening in silver-mounted harness, is a dark-green coach, bearing a coroneted lozenge upon the panels, wherein is seated another ancient dame, like her predecessor, right in the middle of the back seat of her capacious vehicle. She is the widow of an English peer lately deceased, and although staying as the guest of the Lady Elizabeth, at Rent-roll Park, prefers the lonely state and dignity of her own carriage to the society and companionship of her friend. Some hour or more after, just when the archery is about to begin, will arrive a somewhat antiquated, and rather shabby-looking vehicle, filled inside and out to overflowing with passengers, and drawn by a pair of (wretched) post-horses; from this will descend a bevy of blooming damsels, arrayed in white muslins, rather tumbled on account of the close packing: these are the Misses Green, pretty, unaffected daughters of a country clergyman in our county, who, though also the guests of the owner of Rent-roll Park, are thus obliged to pack closely, as neither Lady Elizabeth nor the peer's widow, consistently with their dignity, could find room for even the smallest amongst them in their stately carriages.

The next arrival is the lord-lieutenant, a young Whig nobleman remarkable for nothing but an historical name and a taste for gambling. Hardly has the neat carriage of the Custos Rotulorum driven from the door before it is succeeded by the extremely smart, new, and vulgar-looking turn-out

of the high-sheriff, Mr. Baggs, of Bushelbury Hall, a retired miller, whose large fortune has been founded upon meal, and built up with bills and discount. Both he and his wife, that outrageously smartly-dressed lady, wish that he could always hold office, and for ever rank next to the lord-lieutenant.

Next comes our friend Mrs. Pom-pous, wife of the Lord Bishop of Plumpsee, a washed-out, faded-looking individual of slightly aristocratic birth, whose silly mind has hardly yet got over the disappointment that her episcopal spouse was not elevated at the last vacancy to the archiepiscopal see of York, her anxiety for him to attain to that dignity being very intense, for no other reason than because she understood he would always be compelled to drive four horses, which prudence now forbade; for as she told her intimate acquaintances, 'I do so adore four horses!'

The Chairman of the Heavylandshire Quarter Sessions is the next who turns up, a tall thin man, with a sharp nose like a raven's bill; his likeness to that knowing bird being still further enhanced by a habit he has of always keeping his head on one side and peeping up into your face.

The Dean of Rockminster, a stout, plethoric-looking divine, fond of dry sherry and good cheer, next flashes upon our gaze in all the odour not of sanctity altogether, but of a new silk apron and diamond buckles on his knees and toes, for he is a fresh appointment, and reputed to be very rich.

But the chief of the company are now assembled, and the band commencing with a flourish of trumpets, we are called to the targets, twelve ladies and as many gentlemen on each side, to contend for the honour of Heavyland and Blankshires. What male pen, I would ask, shall dare to attempt a description of the toilets of the fair daughters of the rival counties, who in all the splendour of full archery costume look like a parterre of green, gold, and white flowers as they stand on the well-shaven lawn? If the truth must be told, the costume

of our Blankshire Archery Club—white saucer-shaped straw hats decorated with green ribbon and wreaths of hops, dark watered-silk tight-fitting short jackets, and white muslin dresses—is not a style of adornment that becomes every figure and face. Surely it is a rather trying contrast to the very auburn ringlets and red face of Miss Goldsworthy, our rich banker's daughter. Nor does it much better become the short figure, rather inclined to *en-waistpoint*, and iron-gray hair of Miss Dumpling, who, though sole owner of Puddingbury Hall and five thousand a year, is not quite so young as she used to be. Neither, to my taste, are the chimney-pot shaped straw hats trimmed with bright-green ribbon and apple-blossoms, tight long-skirted, light-green jackets turned up with white, less trying to the ladies of Heavylandshire who are obliged to wear them. But who can suit all tastes and all styles of female loveliness? Surely if the Lady Gertrude Auriol, the beautiful daughter of our great magnate the Earl of Dapplegrey (the deviser of our costume), looks ravishing in it, what more can any one want or expect? The gentlemen of the respective clubs are dressed in gray, black, green, or blue, as suits their several tastes and fancies. And now Miss Sharpeye, the championess of our club, takes her stand in front of the target and prepares to open proceedings. Every gaze is directed upon her as she carefully adjusts her arrow in the string, and then raising her bow until she has attained the required elevation, draws the string gracefully to her ear and lets go the shaft. The welcome flop of the missile as it strikes the mark proclaims the match fairly begun, and the first hit is registered for Blankshire. 'A gold! a gold!' all voices exclaim, and a flourish of trumpets proclaims the event. A red follows, and then a grass, which makes Miss Sharpeye look cross and angry, as is her wont; and the first three of our championship arrows are shot. A tall cavalier, long, lathy, and thin, who shoots, as he does everything else, in a quick and decided manner, succeeds Miss

Sharpeye in front of the target. Soon are his arrows disposed of, and with unerring aim find their destination very nearly in the centre of the mark. This is the champion of our club, and his performance is narrowly watched on both sides accordingly. All sorts and styles of shooting now follow in rapid succession. The Rev. Mr. Punchey, whose rather stout development would, one might have supposed, interfere with the string of his bow, nevertheless acquits himself like a man. Miss Marian Spiteful, whose appearance certainly does not resemble the accounts handed down to us of her namesake the lovely Maid Marian of historic notoriety, seems somewhat embarrassed by her corkscrew ringlets, which have a knack of perpetually getting into her way, and doubtless prevented her from getting that gold, which before stepping up to the target she told me she invariably obtained at every end when practising. After Miss Spiteful comes Mr. Mauler, who will take off his hat to shoot, and always leaves it under the target as a mark for any evil-disposed person to aim at when we cross over to the opposite side; he makes an unsuccessful *début*, and retires precipitately, stamping his feet and muttering something, I fear naughty, between his teeth. The gallant Master of our Hounds, who is more at home in the pigskin and in the hunting field than before a target and on an archery-ground, essays to prove a gigantic yew bow, which he pulls with such tremendous force, and with so high an elevation, that he sends his arrow far, far away over the mansion, over hill and dale, until it at last finds a resting-place in the river, to the no small astonishment of any salmon or trout which may chance to be feeding near where it alights. Lovely Lady Gertrude Auriol sends an arrow right between the fat, silk-bound calves of the Dean of Rockminster, as his Very Reverence is sauntering slowly along some distance from the targets, doing a little bit of mild gossip with the Lady Fanny Fantail. So glaring an outrage on such a dignitary makes the dean jump

and caper not a little, and causes his naturally rather red face to assume a still deeper hue about the region of his shirt-collar. But everybody laughs, even the severe-looking Lady Elizabeth Rentroll, who is dignity itself; so the reverend doctor is obliged to 'grin and abide,' though I fear in his heart he bears an unchristian resentment towards the beautiful cause of all this excitement at his expense. And so the hours quickly speed along until the band strikes up 'The Roast Beef of Old England,' summoning us to dinner to the melody of that good old tune. Bows and arrows are laid aside for knives and forks, and the good things provided by the hospitality of our host quickly disappear, not forgetting a large dish of the archer's fare, viz., beans and bacon. Then follow, as the newspapers have it, the usual loyal and patriotic toasts. Our host gives the Queen and the rest of the Royal Family. The lord-lieutenant gives the host and hostess, and many thanks for their kind hospitality. Our host, good worthy man, who now gets very red in the face, and splutters and stammers a good deal, replies in feeble tones, of which the following words only penetrate into my part of the tent: 'Much obliged'—'glad to see you all'—'hope to do so next time'—'I mean again'—'no, on another occasion'—and so on for some ten minutes, until at last he sits down, pulled, probably, by the tails of his coat by Mrs. Host; this being a hint to cut short his oration, she, with true woman's tact, having seen the impatience of the more enthusiastic archers to be at work again. No sooner, however, is Mr. Host fairly seated once more in his chair than up jumps a sharp-looking, long-nosed little baronet, one of our county Members, who, having a tolerable gift of being able to say a good deal out of nothing, launches first into a history of archery from the time of the mighty hunter Nimrod up to the present day, and winds up his speech by proposing the health of their noble lord-lieutenant, whom he freely bespatters with melted-butter eulogy. Those who are in the secret

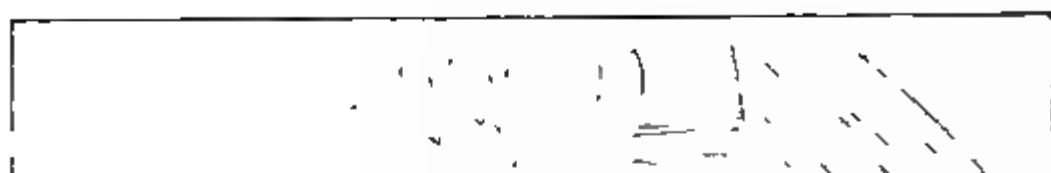
are rather amused at this, for it is not so long ago—only at the last election—that the little baronet was loud in invective against his noble friend as he now calls him. The lord-lieutenant, who blushes a good deal and looks rather spoony, returns thanks for the honour done him, and after administering as strong a dose of flattery as his conscience would permit him to the proposer of his health, in return begs us to drink the county Members. We then toast the sheriff, who looks immensely flattered, and returns thanks in a neat and appropriate speech guiltless alike of H's and grammar. Success to the Blankshire Archery Club then follows, succeeded by the Heavylandshire, with mutual hopes on both sides that whichever may win on this occasion still the present good understanding may be preserved, which sentiment, as we of Blankshire are a long way ahead, we loudly applaud. Last of all, an old foggy, with a very red, well-rasped looking face, enormous shirt-collars, which threaten to take his ears off, and a bald head, who looks like a great-grandfather, but who I am assured considers himself quite a young bachelor, and is enormously rich, gives the ladies; upon which, being naturally of a modest temperament and unaccustomed to public speaking, save at a college supper-party, I cheer loudly, and rush frantically from the tent, lest by any accident, being a somewhat juvenile bachelor, I might be found to be the youngest of those unhappy individuals present, and be called upon to return thanks. After dinner the shooting on our side, I am fain to acknowledge, becomes rather wild and erratic, and partakes more of what the 'Boys' Own Book' describes as 'roving shooting' than anything else. Some, indeed, of the least successful, forgetful of the call their native county has upon them, stray away to follow their own devices and to stroll about the grounds. As the shades of evening advance, and the lengthened shadows fall, we are warned that the contest must soon draw to a close; and those who either by skill, good luck, or a

judicious admixture of both have contrived to plant an arrow during the day near the centre of the gold begin to hope that it will not now be beaten, whilst those whose score and hits are within a few of each other put forth their best efforts to beat their rivals as it were, in racing parlance, 'on the post.' Nor is the honour of the two counties forgotten by their several partisans in their anxiety about their personal interests. As the hour to leave off draws nigher and nigher the contest becomes each moment more and more exciting; the Heavylandshireans have since dinner made up in a great measure for their morning's deficiencies, so that when we on finishing are played off the ground to the tune of 'God Save the Queen,' in order to prepare for the evening sacrifice to Terpsichore, the numbers are so near on both sides that it will require the strictest scrutiny of the markers and the greatest accuracy in their arithmetic to decide which county has gained the victory. Soon after the result of the day's sport is declared, and the state of the score is officially announced by the host, who stutters and stammers even worse than before. First he deeply studies the paper which he holds in his hand; he then declares that 'Heavylandshire' (Blankshire now looks blank) — 'no, I mean Blankshire' (Heavylandshire's countenances fall below zero) — 'no, Heavylandshire' — 'no, Blankshire——.' At last the Secretary comes to his assistance, and Blankshire are declared the winners by one hit. Loud cheering on the part of the Blankshire Club, joined in by those of Heavylandshire who never shoot, and therefore care but little about the result. Prizes are next distributed to the distinguished shots by the hostess, who makes a

much better hand at speaking than her husband, and has a nicely-turned compliment, a kind word to say to each recipient, which are received by a deep curtesy or bow, as the happy successful archer happens to be of the fair or sterner sex. The rawboned Lady Elizabeth is again placed with the same precision as before in her carriage by John Thomas, who I believe had worked out the problem on the drive, the back seat being the centre of a circle. The grim widow is followed in rapid succession by the dowager peeress, who in her turn is followed by the Lady Fanny Fantail, the Dean, and many of the older visitors. Dancing now commences, and is kept up with spirit until long after the clock has struck the morning watch. At supper I make the unfortunate mistake of taking a young aristocratic divine for a footman, and insist, upon his hesitating to serve me with champagne, that he should do so, at which further insult he grins and looks severely upon me, whereupon I inform him in a stern voice, I shall report him to his master. But I am cruelly punished for my mistake, and he is amply avenged, when during the last waltz the worshipped one of my heart, the false, the faithless, and the fair Geraldine Carrington quietly tells me in the most unconcerned manner, as though totally unconscious of my devotion and adoration, that she is engaged to him whom I had deemed but a flunkey. I retire to my chamber in despair, vowing to give up archery, and never again to permit my heart to be made a target whereat the little nude urchin (whom I should like to see well whipped) may direct his arrows.

And so ended our Grand Archery Contest.





Drawn by T. Morten.

"Edith turned and faced them. I shall never forget the look of utter consternation with which Georgy gazed up at her tall, stately sister."

[See "The First Time I saw Her."

THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER.

A London Story.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PARTY.

AFTER his first introduction by Grainger, Wells came to H— Terrace almost as often as Smith. We were on those terms now with Mr. Bush and his family that, in spite of the young person, the lodger and his friends were no longer a distinct set.

Edith, however, never countenanced us; perhaps she was afraid of angering Mr. Grainger.

That gentleman soon declared open war with us, and avoided us on all occasions, very much to our, and I think also to Edith's satisfaction. If we did chance to meet, his cold and sarcastic remarks clearly showed us he objected to our intimacy at No. 3 quite as much as the young person did.

We saw very little of Edith; she was out a great deal, and in the evening she passed most of her time upstairs. One day Smith asked Georgy what her sister did all alone in that little room, and Georgy said, 'Oh, she was doing something about music—composing, or copying out, or something.'

The imp thoroughly hated Edith. I have never seen before two sisters such bitter enemies.

One day the little traitress came smiling into the drawing-room, where Smith, Wells, and I were.

'Mr. West,' she exclaimed, 'I have discovered why Edith hates your being here so. I heard her talking to Agnes about it just now. It is because she doesn't like you to see the part she is playing with Grainger. She says men see through those things so quickly, and it's degrading enough to have to do it, without having witnesses to it. She was in a passion, and said it was too bad of papa to subject her to such humiliation. Agnes offered to speak to papa, but at the bare idea, she cooled down, and got humble and resigned.'

'Are you sure of what you say, Georgy?' I asked gravely.

'Quite. Come down into the back parlour and hear for yourself—they are talking still,' answered this obliging young lady. 'Isn't Edith a hypocrite to be playing in this way with Grainger?' she added. Wells answered quickly for me, but gravely and kindly—

'No, Miss Georgy, all things considered, I cannot call your sister a hypocrite. By your own, or rather, her own words, she shows you what a humiliation she undergoes. Besides, before you judge an action, learn its motive, Miss Georgy.'

We were standing about the window with our backs to the room. As Wells finished speaking, I turned away, and then I saw Edith standing in the back room. I don't know if she had only just entered, or if she had overheard our conversation. She was rather flushed, but she came up to us with perfect composure, and spoke a little about a new piece of music she held in her hand, and then went out.

'Did she hear?' asked Georgy, looking really frightened.

'I trust she did,' said Wells, gravely. 'I would not have betrayed you, Miss Bush, but it is only right your sister should know who is the Judas of the family.' As for Smith he got up without a word and left the house. Georgy thought fit to throw herself on the sofa, and burst into tears. 'Are they genuine?' I whispered to Wells, and he shrugged his shoulders.

In about half an hour Edith reappeared to beg Wells to come up and see Nelly, who had hurt her foot, and couldn't walk. So Wells went up into that mysterious little room, and it was the first but not the last time he spent his afternoon up there with Edith and Nelly.

For about a week after this incident, things seemed to go on more smoothly again. Georgy was frightened, I suppose, at having

gone rather too far, or perhaps it was Smith who kept her in order; at any rate she avoided any direct outbreak with Edith, and on the whole behaved peaceably.

Suddenly Edith set off on one of her mysterious visits, and then Georgy triumphed again, and brought matters to a climax, though in a way she certainly never expected.

Of course directly Edith was safely out of the way, the party question was again brought forward, Mr. Bush's consent obtained, and everything settled to everybody's satisfaction.

I confess once I felt a certain qualm of conscience, as if I were being guilty of a meanness, and even traitorship to the young person, when I allowed myself to be talked over by that dreadful little Georgy into inviting some of my friends, and ordering a dozen of champagne for supper. Still, after all, I had never set up for Edith's ally; on the contrary, we were almost declared enemies. As to Smith—of course I know I have no business with Smith's sins or shortcomings—still I do think Smith ought to have been ashamed of himself. I remembered that manly way in which he had begged Edith's pardon and shaken hands with her—when she was so angry with us all on this very subject—if he didn't. Why, such a clasp of the hand would have bound me over to keep the peace for life! And here it was scarcely three weeks, and he had forgotten all about it, and was again a complete slave in the iron little hands of Miss Georgy.

Wells knew nothing about the scene the Miss Bushes had acted a little while ago to Smith and myself, so he joined innocently enough in our arrangements.

Well! the house gradually fell into confusion: it had begun that process ever since Edith's departure, but as the important Thursday drew nigh, it grew worse and worse. Why all this fuss was necessary I never could understand, but it certainly was very unpleasant, and I began to regret, for my own sake,

that I had ever agreed to the giving of a party.

On Thursday evening I went home rather later than usual, according to Georgy's request. I found the parlour turned into a tea-room, whose presiding genius was Emily, in a very low dress, and with pink roses in her hair.

The drawing-room, in all the glory of uncovered chairs and sofas, was brilliantly lighted, not only by the gaselier, but by sundry lamps and candles distributed about the room, while there was an attempt at flower decoration, and about the windows a queer festooning of pink calico and white muslin.

Agnes was wandering about dressed very soberly in muslin, with only the plaits of her beautiful shining hair for head-dress.

'Georgy insists upon the flowers and pink calico, Mr. West,' she said, as I entered. 'Don't you think they look rather ridiculous?'

Truth to tell, I did; but I was too cowardly to dispute Miss Georgy's taste; so, saying 'Oh, no,' I ran up stairs to dress.

When I came down, there were a good many people in the drawing-room, and, as Willie whispered to me, the party had begun. I don't shine in such scenes—I hate them—so I stole quietly into a back corner, to watch at my ease how things went on. The company was rather mixed; but on the whole I was satisfied by their connections that the Bushes belonged to the higher portion of the middle class.

Some of the gentlemen were rather young, and a little *gauche*, giving me the idea that Willie had been recruiting among his City acquaintance; and some of the ladies seemed a little strange with the Misses Bush; but those who gathered familiarly round Mr. Bush were all of the higher class, and I noticed they treated the old gentleman with a kind of sympathizing respect, while he unbent from his usual severe gravity, and seemed almost cheerful. Agnes played hostess most gracefully, and Georgy, dressed in a perfect maze of flounces, flowers, ribbons, and lace, fluttered about among the company, spreading

'Go, all of you,' said Agnes, in a quick, authoritative voice; 'go, Georgina: it would kill her to find you here when she recovers.'—See p. 263.

laughter and gaiety wherever she went.

Smith and Wells appeared about ten o'clock, and Smith came up to me immediately. 'How is it going off, Lewis?' he whispered. 'Anything extraordinary happened yet?'

'Nothing—everything all right,' I replied, at which Smith seemed greatly relieved.

'I've asked the Harvey people and Muffs,' he said, 'and you know what quizzes they are.'

Just then Georgy came up. 'Are you going to dance with me, Mr. Smith?'

Of course he was, and so off they went.

I couldn't understand Smith's anxiety that all should go on well. What was it to him? or to me? or to any other man, excepting Mr. Bush?

As I said before, I never play an active part in scenes like these. In vain Agnes, who feared I was being neglected, besought me to dance; in vain Georgy tried to beguile me. I was proof even against her attractions, though she offered to give up a waltz with Smith if I liked, and honour me. I preferred sitting in my odd corner, watching the girls' faces, as they smiled and glowed in the dance, and watching the awkward attempts of the City youths at playing the agreeable. I liked to listen to the hum of talk amidst the gay music, and to catch snatches of flirting conversation as the couples passed me; and, best of all, I liked to watch that gay little Georgy whizzing about with her fluttering flounces, now here, now there, laughing, talking, flirting with all. It was even an amusement to look at poor Smith—Smith, usually the gayest, the most courted, to-night looking so annoyed! Could it be the impossibility of keeping that little imp near him, as usual? I had never yet seen Smith reduced to the degree of 'spooniness' that entails jealousy, and I could not believe it possible.

However, I saw him looking much brighter a few minutes after, when he was flying round the room with Georgy in his arms—yes, absolutely in his arms, for Smith was tall, and

the imp very short. I doubt if Georgy's toe touched the floor.

I sat there, and moralized upon human nature in general, and on Smiths andimps as a class, and I felt supremely superior.

As I was just rousing myself to follow the general move to the supper-room, I felt a light hand on my arm, and Nelly said, 'Will you take me down, Mr. West?' I had not noticed the poor blind child all the evening, and my conscience reproached me, so I paid her all my attention during supper, and never spoke to another soul; and afterwards I took her upstairs carefully, and we sat together in my corner. Wells joined us, and there we remained, while the dancing went on all the merrier for the champagne.

It was about twelve o'clock. The gaiety was at its height—the Lancers were being danced with the usual amount of clatter and laughter, when from our corner we saw a tall figure come down stairs, and Edith, dressed in a low evening dress, with a white rose in her dark hair, came slowly, and with stately grace, into room. Her face was pale as the rose she wore, and the dark stern glitter of her eyes, and slight frown on her brow, spoke ominously of the brewing storm.

She went up to her father, and spoke a few words. He seemed surprised to see her, but she evidently hushed his exclamations. She had come in so quietly amid the dancers that she was unobserved, and she stood for an instant, looking calmly round; then she caught sight of us, and came up. 'Nelly, dear,' she said. The blind girl started. 'You here! when did you come back?' she exclaimed. Then she added, in a low, sad voice, 'I feared it would happen like this. Don't be very angry, Edith.' She took her sister's hand caressingly in hers, and held it as I and Wells spoke.

I said very little, for I felt almost guilty; but Wells, who knew nothing, talked unrestrainedly. As Edith stood beside us, Smith and Georgy came sauntering by. Georgy was talking, but I heard Smith suddenly interrupt her with—

'Good heavens, Georgina! there's your sister.'

Edith turned and faced them. I shall never forget the look of utter consternation with which Georgy gazed up at her tall, stately sister. For an instant she blushed and hesitated; then, as if remembering herself, she tossed back her head, laughed a little, impertinent laugh, and drew Smith on.

'The storm won't burst yet,' she said, 'but when it does, it will be something tremendous.'

But the storm that did burst was not what she expected.

When Edith entered the drawing-room I don't believe she ever intended to act as she did. Her character and former conduct, threatening and passionate as it undoubtedly was, supported my assertion that the fault she committed was unpremeditated, and so saved from meanness. Georgy had scarcely passed, leaving Edith quivering inwardly with passion, when Mr. Grainger came up, with his usual confident smile and familiar salutations. Edith's reply was, for the first time, sharp; for the first time she unveiled her dislike and disgust for him. He tried conversation, but her answers were short, her manner cold and repelling; and Grainger, from being astonished, grew sulky, and finally walked off. Nelly's fingers wound caressingly round her sister's, but she withdrew them, and walked into the back room. I felt almost alarmed; I knew the game that Edith had been playing. Was she, in a moment of temper or revenge, going to throw it up, and leave fate to do her worst? Wells looked at me uneasily; presently he rose, saying—

'Let us go into the back room, Lewis.'

He drew Nelly's arm within his, and we all three pushed our way through the dancers. Agnes met us.

'Is it not unfortunate?' she whispered. 'Oh, Mr. West, how I wish I had not yielded to Georgy!'

Mr. Grainger was in the back room, standing sulkily by the piano. Edith sat on the sofa, at a distance, and we went and joined her. I was

quite glad when at last I saw people beginning to depart. I hoped Grainger would follow their example, and leave things as they were till the next day; I dreaded his seeking any more conversation with her that night, for by her glittering eyes I could read that the storm had not yet burst.

But there he stood, looking as dogged as she—every now and then casting angry glances at our group. It must come to-night whatever it was.

The dancers in the front room grew fewer and fewer, and at length the only persons remaining besides the family were Grainger, Smith, Wells, and myself.

Edith rose slowly, as if she meant to slip off quietly; but she had not moved six steps before Grainger followed her.

'May I claim your attention for a few minutes?' he said, in a low voice; but, as I sat near, I could hear every word. 'Will you tell me how I have incurred your displeasure?' he said, formally.

'In no way,' she answered coldly. 'I am not displeased with you.'

'Then why did you treat me just now as if I had most deeply offended you?'

He spoke in the haughtiest tone, almost commandingly. No wonder Edith's eyes lightened, as she answered—

'And by what right do you question me in this manner?'

'By what right?' He laughed a cold, insulting laugh, as he repeated her words, and looked daringly into her face. She returned his look with all the furies gleaming in her eyes, and then turning round with a swift movement, went out and shut the door almost in his face. So ended the party.

Georgy had dared Edith, and Edith had fulfilled her threat, and let Mr. Grainger loose among them. And for all this—the poor father, was he to be the victim? I could not believe it; Edith was too good, too noble for that. She was only frightening them—she must have some means at hand to prevent such a catastrophe.

'I shall come to-morrow,' said

Wells had come with me to examine a plan I had been drawing of some projected church, and we two busied ourselves at the table while Edith stood at the window.—
See p. 264.

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Wells to me, as we parted. 'I can't let her fight it out alone with that fellow.'

Smith said nothing, but he looked very perplexed.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PARTY.

Breakfast was very late the next morning. Only Emily, Edith, and Mr. Bush were at table. Emily's eyes were red and swollen with crying, but Edith was only deadly pale.

Mr. Bush endeavoured to talk a little; but I was too uneasy myself to follow up any conversation, so he gave up the attempt, and we ate our breakfast in grim silence.

Just as I was leaving the table, the servant brought in a note for Mr. Bush, who read it, and then passed it, without a word, to Edith.

I went into the next room for my hat, and then I heard Mr. Bush say, despairingly—

'What can I do? what shall I do? To be hunted and persecuted—'

Then Edith's voice interrupted: 'Hush, papa, dear! only trust to me—only trust to me!' And then some one rushed upstairs.

I put on my hat and went off, not to business, but to Wells, and then with him to Smith's. We talked matters over, and Wells proposed to come back, and speak out boldly to Edith, and beg her to tell us truthfully how matters stood, so that we might interpose, and take the affair in our own hands.

When we arrived at H—— Terrace we found everything quiet. Georgy was sitting in the parlour, knitting, Agnes was reading, and Edith writing. There was something so calm and dignified about the two elder sisters that I thought to myself, if Wells dared to ask Miss Edith to take him into her confidence, and tell him freely her own private affairs, it was certainly a bolder thing than I dared do.

Wells didn't dare it either; so we sat talking on the weather, and the party, and all kinds of subjects, when a double knock came, and in

a few minutes Ann entered, and said—

'Mr. Grainger would be glad to speak to Miss Edith.' Edith closed and locked her desk immediately, and left the room.

We felt we were in the way; we felt that even Georgy would have given worlds to see us take our hats and depart, and yet we could not go. For my own part, I felt I must see Edith when she came away from her interview.

This silent kind of misery was dreadful.

After a time, Agnes gave up all attempt to entertain us, but lay back in the arm-chair with her hands pressed to her temples, listening earnestly, I thought, for the slightest sound overhead. Even Georgy seemed too frightened to speak.

Half an hour must have passed; then the drawing-room door opened and two persons came down stairs. Edith's voice said cheerfully, 'At seven, if you like.' And Grainger answered, 'Very well, then, let it be seven; no fear of my not being punctual. Good bye.'

Agnes started up and Edith came in. I looked at her face; her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes shone feverishly. She came and stood by Agnes.

'We've made up our quarrel, you see,' she said, with an attempt at gaiety; 'I was horribly cross last night; no wonder the poor man was offended.'

Suddenly the colour faded from her face, she put up her hands to her head, and dropped, fainting, at her sister's feet.

'Go, all of you,' said Agnes, in a quick, authoritative voice; 'go, Georgina: it would kill her to find you here when she recovers.'

That evening, as Smith and I sat smoking in Wells's room, Smith's servant brought him a small mauve-coloured note, smelling most deliciously of wood violets. Smith read it and consigned it to his pocket-book amidst our congratulations.

'Now confess,' I said, 'is not that note from No. 3? and confess it is not the first, or second, or sixth of its kind and colour.'

'Don't be impertinent, Lewis,'

answered Smith; 'but do you know it contains the news we all feared.'

'What!' I exclaimed, 'the father is not arrested?'

'No; but Edith is going to marry Grainger; in a fortnight, too.'

Wells made no remark, but I saw him compress his lips firmly.

That was the only regular notice we had of Edith's engagement; but in the constant visits of Grainger at all hours, in the busy preparation of dresses, &c., and in the grave sad looks of Agnes and Edith we read daily of the coming event.

Gradually it became the talk of the family, and we joined in our remarks as if we had known it as long as themselves.

Edith, however, kept studiously out of our way. I never saw her except at meals, and then I noticed that she was daily growing thinner and paler. Our warfare had ceased entirely. If she spoke to me it was with the courteous indifference with which she would have addressed a perfect stranger; and if she ever met me on the stairs in any of her peculiar appearances, she never paused to make any annoying remark, but passed on as if too absorbed in her own affairs to have a thought for me.

On Sunday evening—the wedding was fixed for Thursday—Wells and I went to No. 3 rather earlier than usual. We had not been able to find Smith, but were not surprised on Edith telling us Agnes and Georgy were walking in Kensington Gardens.

Wells had come with me to examine a plan I had been drawing of some projected church, and we two busied ourselves at the table while Edith stood at the window.

She was dressed for walking, and evidently waiting for Mr. Grainger. We both watched her a little as we studied the plan; for Edith was an object of interest to us, more particularly now that she so studiously avoided us.

She seemed scarcely conscious of our presence, certainly not of our regards, as she stood with her grave face turned half towards us, her thoughts evidently busily and sadly engaged, to judge by the changing

expression of her usually quiet countenance.

Wells made some rather queer remarks on my plan, and repeated the same things two and three times over; so feeling disgusted, I rolled up the paper and went to put it back in my desk. Was Wells going to do the same by Edith, Smith was doing by Georgy? You see, I don't attempt to give it a name; these things are incomprehensible to me, only I, myself, felt very much inclined to go up to the tall figure at the window and—. I happened to turn round; Wells *had* gone up to the tall figure at the window, and—why he was only talking to her about the—sunset, I think. I felt relieved—why should not I go too? Wells looked a little grim at my approach, but Edith looked just the same, neither graver or gayer, so I didn't mind Wells. I caught a reflection of all three of us in the glass as we stood together. I saw a tall man, broad-shouldered, and with a great deal of whiskers, &c., standing a full head taller than the grave, handsome lady, and beside them, why, a mere boy, with a face like a statue, but with the resolution of a hero on it. I turned away.

'Have you been out this evening?' Wells asked.

'Not yet; I am waiting for Mr. Grainger,' Edith said out boldly.

'For Mr. Grainger! why I saw him not long ago at Richmond, and he told me he intended staying all night.'

She turned and looked steadily in his face. 'Strange he should not have written or sent to tell me,' she muttered: then untying her bonnet and taking it off, she smiled scornfully, I suppose at her own thoughts.

Presently she said, 'You seem to know Mr. Grainger very well;' she spoke unwillingly, and turned away so as to avoid Wells seeing her face.

He answered, 'Yes,' laconically.

I saw she hoped he would say more, but he stood silent, waiting for her to question, which she would not do. I walked away and sat down to leave them freer. I felt the boy had more power than the man.

'Miss Bush,' Wells half whispered in his earnest voice, 'may I ask you

* She went up to the table and took up a card, looked at it for an instant, and then threw it down, and sitting down by the table, folded her arms upon it, and laid her head wearily on them, and there stayed quietly. Poor bride! Down stairs we heard the merry laughter of her sisters, and the shrill voice of Georgy exclaiming on the beauty of the bridal dresses.—See p. 267.

one question, and will you pardon its seeming impertinence?"

He paused, and she said, coldly, 'Speak on.'

'Do you know the character, the former life of the man you are going to marry?"

Wells spoke so earnestly, so kindly, it was cruel of her to answer as she did.

'So well, sir, that I require no information on the subject.'

I saw Wells's face flush; but he never flinched.

'Is it your wish—are you happy in the idea of your coming marriage?' he continued. 'Edith, listen!' he caught her hand and held it as he spoke; 'I ask you this out of no idle curiosity. Duty and every honourable feeling urge, force me to do it. Answer me truthfully, boldly, as you know you can, if you choose.'

'Take your hand away, Mr. Wells,' she said, in a stern voice, but so low I could scarcely hear it.

'Be angry if you choose,' he answered, still clenching her hand, 'but listen to me. When I have spoken, act as you will, I shall have done my duty. If you cast away the help Heaven sends you now, in the future, Edith—a future which I warn you will be as dark as the company of sin can make it—you must not dare accuse fate or Heaven of your misery. Remember, it's your own doing, your own sacrifice, not to filial love, to filial duty, but to pride.'

'You cannot judge,' she said, coldly; 'you do not know my position.'

'I know more than you think, more than you know yourself,' he answered, sternly; 'but I have spoken; do as you please. I will not save you against your will. Mr. Grainger is a rich man.'

I never heard Wells sneer before. I was glad to see that Edith flushed. She muttered something about his misunderstanding her, and then went out of the room, and Wells gave her a grand, stately bow as she passed.

For the next two days, Wells didn't come to the house, and I kept out of it as much as I could. It

pained me beyond measure to see the gay preparation, to see all the girls laughing and joking over the wedding-cards and favours—all but the bride elect. Besides, there was a great deal of confusion, worse than before the party—that ill-fated party which had brought all this to pass.

Well, time flies! The eve of the wedding-day came. The drawing-room was all fresh with lace curtains and flowers; in the dining-room, plate and glass (come from Heaven knows where) lay scattered about; and in every room something betokened the coming event.

Smith and I were now on very intimate terms with the family, so we were admitted to the party assembled round the drawing-room table, and allowed to assist in the composition of the announcement of the marriage to be inserted in the 'Times,' and in directing the envelopes with the cards.

'Mr. and Mrs. W. Grainger. There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip,' I thought; 'but—.' I could not finish my thought, for at that instant Wells came in and we had to make a general move to give him room.

Edith was not with us. She and Wells had not met since Sunday, and I was surprised now that Wells should come. He was very silent, and I noticed he would not touch a card or a favour.

We sat there till it grew dusk; then the dressmaker came, and the young ladies rushed down stairs, followed by Smith, who has the 'brass' for anything. I went into the back room and threw myself on the sofa to await their return, and Wells followed.

We heard some one come into the room, and in the dusky light we could distinguish the figure of Edith, taller by half a head than any of her sisters.

She went up to the table and took up a card, looked at it for an instant, and then threw it down, and sitting down by the table, folded her arms upon it, and laid her head wearily on them, and there stayed quietly. Poor bride! Down stairs we heard the merry laughter of her sisters, and the shrill voice of Georgy ex-

claiming on the beauty of the bridal dresses.

A quarter of an hour passed—then Wells got up, and went to pass out of the door of the front room. Edith started.

‘Oh!’ she exclaimed, ‘Oh! Mr. Wells, is that you?’

She half rose from her chair, then dropped down again wearily, and Wells came up to her.

‘Did you call me?’ he asked, quietly.

‘I—I wished to thank you for—for—’ Her voice trembled so, she could scarcely speak. I could hear her breathe even in the back room—she almost gasped. Then she suddenly sprang up: ‘Oh, Mr. Wells, is it too late?’ she asked, in a low voice—‘is it too late? Do help me—do save me—I am so wretched!’

I only just saw that Wells’s hand was clasped in both hers, and then I crept out of the room. I do so hate scenes.

Half an hour after I heard Wells come rushing down stairs. I met him.

‘Well?’ I said.

‘I will do my best,’ he answered. ‘I am fully justified in using all the power I have over him, but it will have to be lightning work. Good night.’

I did not understand in the least what Wells meant, but I felt that the boy might be depended on.

CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH EDITH BECOMES MRS. —.

The next morning dawned gloriously fine. Everyone was up early, and everybody but Mr. Bush and Agnes seemed in good spirits. Of course Edith did not appear.

The wedding was to take place at half-past eleven, and by half-past ten the company began to make their appearance. I had heard nothing of Wells; but a large bouquet had come from Mr. Grainger for the bride; and I began to wonder how the slip was to be made between the cup and Mr. Grainger’s lip.

As I went down out of my room, dressed in my wedding garments, the door of that mysterious little

room opened, and Edith, wrapped in a large shawl, peeped out.

‘Have you any news of Mr. Wells?’ she asked, faintly.

‘No. And you?’

‘None—yet he promised so faithfully.’

I did not know what to say.

‘What time is it?’

‘Half-past ten.’

‘Then I must give it up. He couldn’t help it, I suppose.’

I shall never forget her look of utter distress as she turned and shut the door.

In about half an hour she came down, in her white bridal dress and long floating veil. She looked stately, but not beautiful; her face was too pale, her eyes too heavy, and she had a dull, unconscious look, as if she were acting in her sleep; and only when her father appeared she struggled to smile and look contented, and then it was absolutely painful to look at her.

I went and sat near her. As I passed she started, and looked up at me with such a deep, wild, piteous glance, that I could not help pausing to whisper—

‘There is still a quarter of an hour, and he said it would have to be “lightning” work.’

‘True,’ she muttered. ‘Surely he cannot fail me!’

But eleven o’clock struck, and the company began to move off. Edith sat perfectly still watching them as they went in parties, all gay and laughing. Agnes lingered a little—she seemed longing to say something. Once or twice she went towards the bride, then looked at her father, and hesitated and retired again. At length the bridesmaids went, and I was obliged to follow; so there we left Edith alone with her father.

‘Inevitable!’ I muttered to myself, as I put the last bridesmaid in the carriage, and then went back to the house to fetch the old aunt, whom I had undertaken to convey in my brougham to church.

Just then a hansom, driving at full speed, came in sight. I paused—something told me it was the reprieve. In another instant it was at the door, and Wells, looking pale

and haggard, sprang out. He caught my arm—

‘Has she gone?’

‘No. What have you done?’

‘Come up,’ he replied.

We dashed up stairs together, and in an instant he was standing beside Edith. He gave her a note, saying, ‘He started an hour ago for Paris.’

What was in the note I never knew. All I know is, that she read it, gave it to her father, and then sat down and burst into such a storm of sobs and tears that I was fairly frightened; and that Wells, in spite of Mr. Bush’s presence, flung himself beside her, and—I shouldn’t like to say joined her in her tears, but he certainly looked dreadfully white, and his voice shook as he spoke; and I know that the company waited at the church till they got quite tired, and then they came back; and I know that there was no wedding that day.

I am not going to write of the wonder and disappointment of everybody as they came rushing back and found the drawing-room empty, and the bride and bridegroom nowhere; nor of the whispering, and sneers, and hypocritical condolences, as Georgy went about making up an awfully fabulous account of Mr. Grainger’s sudden and alarming illness. All I can say is, that I don’t think any one believed it; and that most people thought it a most romantic affair, wondered if Mr. Bush would make it a breach of promise case, and at how much he would put the damages; and some said ‘It served that proud, conceited Edith right;’ and all were, on the whole, rather pleased, as we all are, in the misfortunes of our friends.

As for Smith and myself, we were unfeignedly delighted, and went and smoked—in unutterable peace of mind—a cigar in the back parlour, waiting for Wells, who was closeted with Mr. Bush and Edith.

It was a day of dreadful confusion at No. 3—even dinner was forgotten to be ordered; and at seven o’clock Smith and I were obliged to request Ann to bring up some of the wedding breakfast, and Georgy, whose feelings were never too much for her,

joined us, and we managed for ourselves, and did pretty well, considering.

As for Wells, he came in for a few minutes, and, after recruiting his strength with a glass of champagne, told us Grainger was not likely to trouble his English friends for some time; but he would not enter into particulars—he said his word was pledged. Afterwards we learnt from his lawyer that it was a charge of forgery and embezzlement that had humbled Mr. Grainger’s pride, and sent him travelling so quickly; and that a cheque for three hundred pounds had been given in exchange for a note declining the honour of Edith’s hand, and another little paper that Wells had burnt even before he parted with Grainger.

The lawyer seemed to think the whole affair a good joke; but said Wells was rather ‘soft’ not to prosecute; and to pay the three hundred pounds, when Mr. Grainger was in such a fright, he would have given him twenty notes declining any number of young ladies’ hands, and little bits of paper *ad libitum*, all for nothing.

I left No. 3, H— Terrace, and went abroad for the autumn, and the winter found me still in Germany. I loitered the spring and summer away in France; and when I returned to England, I found No. 3 empty, and the Bushes flown, no one knew where.

Smith also had left London, and was, I was told, staying in Scotland. So I drove down to Wells’s place, near Richmond. Wells was out too—provoking! but the servant said Mrs. Wells was at home, would I like to see her. ‘Very much.’ There in the drawing-room sat Edith, stately as ever, and without a vestige of the housemaid about her. She received me quite warmly, and we had a tête-à-tête dinner, and talked over old times. She was so gracious, graceful, refined, yet easily free, that I quite understood the fascination she had exercised over Wells; and it was with intense amusement that I recalled to her memory our warfare, and how rudely she used to behave towards me.

‘Ah! Mr. West,’ she said, ‘you

would scarcely believe what a time of torture that was to me. How I hated you—at least your presence!’

Then she told me she had been striving and working for two years to make a hundred and fifty pounds, that at the Christmas of the preceding year, when her father expected to receive a hundred and fifty pounds, they might free themselves of Grainger.

‘I know,’ she said, ‘it was a dangerous and an insincere part I played towards Mr. Grainger, encouraging him, but never meaning to marry him; but I thought the

motive justified me. Still, if it had not been for my husband—’

‘And Georgy,’ I said presently.

‘Oh, Georgy is very well. She is at present flirting valiantly with Mr. Smith’s cousin.’

‘Then I shall still find Smith a bachelor,’ I said, very much relieved.

Edith laughed. ‘Yes,’ she answered. ‘He fought bravely for liberty, and conquered. Will you like to come and see papa and my sisters this evening?’ she asked, presently. ‘They live close to us; and I don’t think Willie will be home before ten.’

And so we went.

CRICKETANA—THE GREAT DAY AT LORD'S.

Eton v. Harrow.

THE Eton and Harrow match was a day of days. Year after year the attraction has seemed greater, till at last Lord's, ‘on the Schools’ day,’ is like Ascot on the Cup day—not *one* of the events, but *the* event of the London season. It is quite a British institution. Any man who studies English manners and customs, especially on Horace’s principle,

‘Ætatis cujusque notandi sunt Tibi mores,’

would think it was more than his character was worth to keep away.

This day you saw Young England in its glory. You saw small boys in swarms—most restless, noisy animalculæ—with every step of the family ladder, ‘big fellows,’ and elder brothers of all sizes, with fathers of the younger sort, men who quite surprised you by their talk about the play of their sons: it seemed only the other day that they were boasting of their own. Of course there was the usual proportion of the ladykind. Hundreds of pretty graceful figures would you see, sitting on their horses, with ribbons or fancy sprigs, dark-blue or light, and saying ‘I am Harrow,’ or ‘Louisa’s Eton,’ as naturally as if they followed their brothers, in body as in mind, through all the scenes they seem to know so well. Each held a ‘correct card,’ and was as familiar

with the names of Buller or of Lubbock as ladies usually are with the favourite on the race day.

I quietly threaded my way around the ring, both back and front, equally careful not to tumble over those precocious little brats who were talking like men, as to avoid the horses of their sisters, who seemed for the nonce to talk as exactly as possible in tone and topic like Harrow or Eton boys.

But the ladies were not all so sylph-like. Every thirty or forty yards I found about half a form monopolized by the superfluous breadth and crinoline of some lady that looked more Bloomsbury than Belgravian; and since nearly every one of those very important younger fry represented an expenditure of some two or three hundred a year—when would they ever earn and repay half the sum so credulously invested?—we naturally asked ourselves, What could these rural and suburban matrons want, looking so anomalous among the fashionable throng? Some we found were Eton dames and Harrow matrons, or wives of substantial shopkeepers who had thrived and fattened on the respective colleges till they felt an interest and identity in their fate and fortunes; and not a few seemed evidence of the fact that Eton is not wholly aristocratic, but that, as once we knew, the young marquis may stand side by side in class with

the son of the milliner who decks his noble mother on a court day.

Such were the component parts of the compact circle which made Lord's Cricket Ground look like the lists of a tournament, while 'behind the ropes'—though ropes unhappily there were none—almost every coronet in town might be seen on the panels of four-in-hand, drag, phaeton, chariot, brougham, or courtly waggonet, many of which were duly Fortnum-and-Masoned, and came prepared to make a spread and have a pic-nic between the innings.

And to a state of decidedly 'dead-lock' these carriages had soon become. One friend we saw driving innocently into the thickest, thinking, 'good easy man,' to look on for an hour and then face about and read the issue of the contest in next day's 'Morning Post.' We just saved him from the fate of others whose carriages had to bide their turn till eight o'clock. But meanwhile all bore colours. Even whips and horses' heads, as well as button-holes, showed the colours of 'our boy's school;' and we could not move around, on the usual voyage of discovery to see who was there, without being challenged to declare our party. To Harrow we said we most inclined because it was their turn to win; and all we wish is that every match may leave the combatants only the more eager, 'just to try that over again.'

In this way was Lord's being fast changed into an amphitheatre when some one looked at his watch and said,

'It is about time for the express trains from Windsor and Harrow; for, as yet, only the Elevens are here, with a few stragglers, absentees, and younger brothers, with boys from other schools who look up to Eton and Harrow as the favoured of the land, but soon you will see——'

While yet he spoke there came a swarm of light-blue ribbons and of darks—every cab at the stations was crammed with 'fellows' without regard to the licence to carry, and all came racing to the ground together; and great was the triumph of the Etonians when they found Tritton

'well in,' and such figures as 3, 100, 26 on their telegraph: every small boy could decipher this as implying 'three wickets only down, 100 runs got when the last man was out, and 26 the last man's score'—and more stunning now than ever all the usual shouting of 'Well hit' or 'bowled' was heard from those shrill pipes which, by the very degree of their shrillness, tell the time of day to any experienced looker-on.

We were standing by an elderly gentleman, an Etonian of 1812, who had annually watched the school matches till he had learnt to generalize—knew all the phenomena, even the natural history of the biped schoolboy—and after much vociferous shouting, yclept 'chaff,' our friend remarked, 'These fellows, you will find, always get rather hoarse about five o'clock, and then we shall feel a little more comfortable.' This proved true: still the said cheers and counter cheers were at times amusing, though to some we take exception as not quite generous.

Cheers of encouragement are natural enough, but cries of 'well bowled,' ironically, or 'take him off,' when an opponent is not for the moment quite doing himself justice, this is not fair in a game which depends so much on nerve and freedom from irritation. But what was 'the unkindest cut of all'—we actually heard a jeer at one who was bowled out first ball! Now every true cricketer has a feeling for a poor fellow who, after he has been heart and soul for weeks practising, and, perhaps, picturing to himself the score he may add to his side in the great school match, is doomed first ball to hear that most painful sound of rattling stumps behind him, and, looking back, to find it true, and who then has to walk back, looking sedulously at his toes, swinging his bat in a most vain affectation of indifference, and, arrived at the pavilion, to hear (how often!), after many a question, 'How did that happen?' his disaster attributed to the very failing about which he feels most sore!

So, henceforth remember, my young friends, and beware of all

such jokes as turn a day of pleasure into pain. For, really these things were no trifles on that eventful day. There was scarcely one player on either side but had a father, mother, brother, sister looking on, and not a few had the whole family tree, trunk, twigs, and branches altogether, with eyes converging to 'our Harry at that wicket. See now—now he is going to have the ball.' Yes, and all with hearts so tremulous with emotion, and pride, and interest on the credit the boy should do himself before the assembled thousands, that the excitement of an election, and the steady increase of the poll, is the only event in life which will at all help one to realize the zest with which every run was added—valued as the miser's guineas—to the family score-paper.

If any one of my readers was so luckless as not to have been there to see, he must picture Lord's, resounding as it did with all these cries and cheers, turned by five o'clock into a close arena like a compact and dense ring-fence. The carriages, mixed with horsemen and horsewomen, formed, as it were, the massive background. Before these were rows of forms with thousands seated, and as many looking over each other's shoulders, who thus presented a second and a third level, while before all these, again, were rows of sitters on the grass, with small boys at their feet, graduating to a fringe or as pebbles on the beach.

In truth there were almost too many spectators for the fair issue of the fray. Every hard hit involved a kind of hunt-the-slipper among the sitters. One ball was heard cannoning from the panel of a carriage; and, how the circular glass of a certain lady's brougham escaped fracture from another ball, which came from Mr. Lubbock's bat just where we were standing, was to us a marvel. Many a ball was stopped by the dense rows of spectators for 'twos' which had else been 'fours,' though, as a set off, the fieldsmen were in some cases much hindered by the throng.

As the game was commencing, the betting was about even, though the

Etonians were the favourites at choice. The ground for the wickets had been prepared with more than usual care, though the greater part of the ground remains in the same disgraceful condition which has been so often remarked. Let us hope this autumn something will be done, for we can hardly believe that any two clubs simply bent on matching their strength together would ever choose Lord's for their arena. The prestige of Lord's and the West End situation will not alone secure a preference while so fair a stage as the Oval is available. In consequence of the state of the ground we hardly did the Harrovian fielding justice on the first day. Indeed we feared they were decidedly inferior, but when once used to the ground, and their confidence established, one of the oldest players present agreed with us that he had never seen so much ground covered by an Eleven before. The very large number of hard hits stopped for 'singles' surpassed anything we had ever observed before.

One observation was forcibly thrust upon us—youth is the season for cricket. From seventeen to twenty is the age of the greatest quickness and elastic spring. As I happened to be standing by an old player, who, like myself, almost regretted he had left off, we both remarked that now we could indeed realize the falling off from our former selves. 'Yes,' said he, 'that is fielding; that is what we used to do, and that is what we used to be. Bless me, we are quite cripples in comparison, and half the All England Eleven compared with these fine big boys, with strength enough and spring and energy to spare, look stiff as alligators too.'

As to the game, we do not think it necessary, at this distance of time, to enter into detail, although we have no doubt that all the most successful batsmen, as Hornby and Grimston on the one side, Tritton, Fredericks, and Lubbock on the other, will remember their score—ay and not be above talking of it, however high their honours at the bar or the senate, to their dying day. Why, 'old fellows' of either school

of fifty years and upwards did we hear talking their school match over again, with memory fresh and looks as animated as if it were but yesterday!

We shall be contented to observe that the game was interesting to the last, and ended in a state to leave both parties something to say for themselves. Each could argue, with some little cause to show, how the game would have been theirs had it only been played out; and as to this playing out, had a third day been possible, such was the excitement, that we doubt if Lord's would have held all the people who would have thronged together to see the fortune of the fray decided.

To speak of the various ups and downs, as the Eton Eleven went in first the stand made by Tritton and Frederics looked at one time very unpromising. To us especially, who looked not only to the freedom of the hitting but to the style and promise of the play, the conclusion was inevitable:—If Eton men have so fine a form of play as this in the school, they will not be beaten to-day; for, two players, young or old, with better use of the bat, we never saw, especially considering that each stood up every inch a man. There are not five players we could mention whose position at the wicket, in 'playing tall,' would compare with theirs. We saw no unsightly stooping on the bat; the bat just touched the ground as if to ascertain the line of the wicket (as Hayward does), and then was thrown back with free wrist and arm, and each of these players commanded every inch of ground that this natural height would allow.

In this nervous point of the game while these stubborn foes were yet unmoved, more than once there was a little council of war held upon the field and a change decided in the bowlers; but, as generally happens, when once the two stickers were separated all went so swimmingly as quite to baffle computation and show their fears were vain.

But when the last man was out, and 184 were the ugly figures to go in against, knowing as we do the chances of the game, particularly

at Lord's, and knowing also how rarely young players do themselves full justice on occasions so exciting we certainly thought that Eton would have an easy victory; and no sooner did they begin to field than at 'long-leg,' Lubbock, whose fame in fielding had gone before him, seemed to be so well supported, that the hardest hits would rarely score but one. Certainly twenty byes appear to tell no friendly tale of Eton fielding; but the state of the ground and the length of the innings, 184, claim indulgence, for all old cricketers know that after an innings has extended beyond 130 runs the long-stop is apt to flag, and then threes and 'fours with fast bowling come apace on a lively ground.

However, much as was the work cut out for Harrow, they quickly appeared in a fair way to do it. The Eton bowling soon seemed weak, and the Harrow batting, with Hornby and Grimston, as soon seemed strong. Twenty runs were made when the first wicket fell, and ninety-five more were made before the second fell—a stubborn resistance, which also called councils of war and many a change among the Etonians too. But meanwhile time was going on, the shades of evening were already lengthening, and ardently did Harrovians hope the same good wickets would remain standing when time was called:—because then, with a little early practice, things would look most promising for the morrow. And so it came to pass that the telegraph recorded '174 runs for three wickets' when the mass of carriages began to move—or rather try to move—and thus to realize something like the difficulties of the ice-bound navigators at the north-west passage.

Not a few Harrovians all that evening were speculating on the delightful fact that all the runs within eight were made; two good men were in and six more remained to follow; and sanguine were the calculations of beating Eton, and perhaps in a single innings. Certainly the position of Harrow was a safe one. 'Win we may but lose we cannot. For, if the Eton score runs long, time will run short, and the game will end in "a draw."' "

However, if three wickets produce 174, it does not follow, in cricket arithmetic, that ten wickets will therefore make triple that amount; and next day the other seven wickets fell for 94, making the Harrow innings of 268 against the 184 of Eton!

This gave another turn to the game—Eton had 84 to wipe off before a run could count against the adversary!

In this innings, or rather *outings*, Mr. Buller, who had been lame, and was even allowed a runner, took the ball, and soon showed how much the loss of his bowling in the first innings prejudiced his side, for he now got by catch or bowling six wickets! But Eton soon 'got a hold.' Mr. Tritton, who had scored 91 in the first innings, added 58, when he was beautifully caught by Grimston, second to none of the Harrow field, though good men all.

This made 149 runs to Mr. Tritton's bat alone, nearly the largest score ever added by one bat in the whole history of the school matches. Mr. Meyrick, for Winchester, in 1826, beat this score by one, making 4 and 146, and Mr. Bailey, for Eton, in 1841, made 152, having only one innings, but on neither of these occasions was the bowling as good. When, after this, Mr. Lubbock proved to be in his play—he had been caught without a run in the first innings—the Eton batsman soon cleared off all arrears, and the figures, amidst hearty cheers, ran up by tens, most rapidly, till 201 was the balance to try the mettle of the Harrovians.

'And why should we not have made them?—We made 67 more than that number in our first innings. Our batting would have been all the bolder for the practice, and your bowling rather "used up" by two days' hard work.'

'That's all very well, my fine fellows, but we had got the runs; while you had yet the runs to get, and a stern-chase is a long one always.'

We give this as a specimen of what was said on both sides.

And what do we say?

Why, that it was a run-getting game, and 208, under the circum-

stances, were not so many, for the Eton bowling was loose, there was no well-set and compact delivery about the Eton bowlers, and such bowling certainly would not improve upon acquaintance.

We call it, therefore, a very fair 'draw,' anybody's game, and all the more tantalizing that it could not be played out. And as to the value of the school time—as to the possible number of lines that might have remained unconned or the longs and shorts unmanufactured—there was a spirit of honourable emulation, all those joyous and most thrilling hours, sent like a vital fluid pulsing through the veins, that was enough to charge those youthful hearts with energy to prompt to noble deeds for many a year to come. This seems to us as part and parcel of 'public education.' To turn out the noblest part of England's sons before all the first families in the land just once a year, and let them feel the joys of noble enterprise, when the hearts of hundreds leap in sympathy with each manly effort—is there any mind so narrow as to deem this waste of time? No; rather let us remember that books are but a means to an end, and few days indeed can we find in life that teach so impressive or so pleasant a lesson as comes self-taught amidst the exulting thousands who muster annually at the school matches on Lord's Cricket Ground.

The match just passed makes the thirty-eighth contest, of which Eton has won nineteen, Harrow sixteen, with three games drawn.

It is curious to observe the many players known to fame who made their début at these school matches. About 1822 we have C. Wordsworth, Herbert Jenner, and Roger Kynaston; about 1825 we have Lord Grimston, Capt. Davidson, and Harrenc, who first bowled with a round arm for Harrow; in 1827, Hon. E. Grimston,—his son it was whose style (and effect) gave equal promise in the match described; in 1833-34, Hon. F. Ponsonby, C. Taylor, T. Kirwan, and Broughton; in 1835, W. Pickering, the best field at cover ever seen, and who invited the Eleven of England to America; in 1836, Anson, Boudier, and others of

more recent times, too many to enumerate. Indeed a leading place in the Harrow or Eton Eleven results at once in a place in a University Eleven, and, if leisure permits, in the principal matches at Lord's.

And now we would emphatically call attention to the fact that several school matches have of late years remained unfinished. The reason is that they have been played during the school time, and not, as formerly, at the beginning of the holidays. While the same system continues, it is to be feared that the same unsatisfactory result will continually recur, to the serious disappointment of thousands, till the interest of the match will be destroyed altogether. No one can say that on this last occasion the players did not make the best use of the time allowed them. The cry was raised, 'Pitch the stumps early: begin at eleven, and the decision is in your own power.' But not so: experience shows that boys cannot be kept at the highest pitch of excitement through the many hours of a long summer day without tiring, and then the play becomes loose—particularly the bowling or the fielding—they can no longer play; their hardest runs come apace; and the match is as far from a finish as ever.

The truth is, there is no difficulty in playing in the holidays, unless the school authorities raise a difficulty by sending the boys home at different times. And surely the matches are of no little importance, if it were only as a meeting of old schoolfellows and a Pan-Hellenic assembling of patriotic and congenial spirits. Masters need not disdain to encourage the feelings which find expression in these long-looked-for days. These annual contests are not the mere fashion of a day. They date, with more or less regularity, from the beginning of the century. The oft-quoted match of 1805, in which Lord Byron played for Harrow on the old Lord's Ground, now covered by Dorset Square, is certainly the only match for twenty years of which the score is preserved; further scores were destroyed by the burning of the pavilion,

which occurred between the first and second day of one of these identical school matches. But Lord Byron's match was only one of a series in which, with more or less regularity, the two schools from time to time measured their strength. In early days, before those facilities of travelling which now so readily transport opposing forces to the field of action, the school matches were played, if not annually, with as much regularity as the times allowed. They were played at such intervals and with such members of each Eleven as could manage to come to London. This irregular period of the school matches extended to the year 1832. After that date the matches were played every year without intermission, and played in the holidays, up to the time that (about seven years since) the Head Master of Eton interfered. Every one of those matches was finished, and each school won, we think, an equal number—a fact highly creditable to Harrow, which, be it remembered, at the first appointment of Dr. Vaughan, twenty years since, was reduced in numbers to seventy boys. Of course for years the numbers were much less than at present, with an undue proportion of little boys too young to play. But happily the old Harrovians, the Honourables Ponsonby, Grimston, and their friends, never lost sight of the rising players, but did no little to adjust the balance, and from the smaller forces contrived by precept and encouragement to train up enough to support the honour of the school.

During the time that these school matches were forbidden, as if to make the best of the disappointment, and to show how unwilling men were to allow that these annual contests should ever cease, a match was got up by Etonians against Harrovians, the players to be under twenty years of age.

At length the Eton Master was induced to consent to the match, provided it was played during the school time; and the Master of Harrow, believing it to be the less of two evils, concurred in the same arrangement, and allowed two days'

holidays for the Eleven. This arrangement for playing during the school time the Master of Eton deemed necessary to obviate evils he apprehended from boys remaining too long in London.

While every one was inquiring how the school matches could once more be sanctioned, we claim it as our own suggestion that the Master of Eton should be requested to waive his prohibition on these terms: that each of the Eleven should satisfy him he had an invitation to the house of some friend who could be trusted to stand in *loco parentis* for the time. Now, beyond all doubt, there is many a man known to Eton and to Harrow who would enact the part of a duenna or chaperon of the male kind, and send back the whole Eleven as innocent-minded as he received them—for the no small consideration of having the honour of bringing his young friends to the ground in prime condition for the play.

We are well aware that there are certain evils against which the guardians of youth do well and wisely to beware. But no one who saw the age and manliness of those fine young fellows who riveted the admiring eyes of thousands in July last could possibly believe that 'the will' would ever want 'the way,' or that, whether in London or at Windsor, any safeguards would avail in things without. The whole secret is *diversion*—blow off the steam which you cannot confine. A man cannot be, in body or in mind, in two places at the same time. Only excite an interest in deeds of good report, and many an ill deed will long remain undone. Once bar the river and the playing-fields, and we envy not the responsibility of masters, with pent-up spirits and passion rife, in such fearful numbers as now find a sphere and a safety-valve for their resistless energies in a healthful and a natural direction. But it were only half wise to open the playing-fields without making their pastimes popular by proposing some end worth playing for. So, the match at Lord's, played so commonly, and played *out*, cannot be

regarded as any trifling or unnecessary indulgence. The match tells at once upon the sports of Eton, as those sports tell beyond all question as the only practicable safeguard against the very evils in which a few days in London are foolishly supposed to make so wide a difference.

If this reasoning were ever true, it has twofold cogency at the present day; for the tendency now is rather to effeminate and unmanly habits.

It is a misfortune to a studious man to have no diversions. It is equally a misfortune to the idle to have no resource. With the habits of a cricketer early formed, and a confidence in superiority in one point of the game at least, many a man has had his labours lightened or his temptations lessened, who, but for so fascinating an amusement, would have nothing to break in upon a torpid and sensuous existence.

We call therefore upon all old Etonians to exert their influence to cause the matches to be played at that time only in which they are ever likely to be brought to a conclusion. Let some one or two family men meet the laudable wishes of the master for his pupils' safety, as also for avoiding any little scrape to bring discredit on the school, and we can hardly believe that any request so reasonable will fail of good results.

While speaking of youthful cricketers, we may make some brief notice of Mr. E. Grace, now in Parr's A.E. Eleven, whose remarkable performances, have been quite the event of the season.

Mr. E. Grace is a Gloucestershire man, in his twenty-second year, and from childhood famed in the West Gloucestershire and other country clubs. His fielding is first-rate; he can take any place in the field, being a good long-stop, though long-leg and cover are the places to make the most of him. His bowling is decidedly useful; for he bowls underhand slows as well as fast round-arm; of his slows, like nearly all slows since the days of Clarke, it is enough to say they have their lucky days; but in his round-arm bowling he has great command; it is very

good of the kind, though of a plain description.

But it is in batting that Mr. Grace has won his chief renown. He ended last season with his great innings of 192, at Canterbury; and this season his average, calculated in twelve first-class matches, or 21 innings, is just 40! Of these 12 matches, 3 were against All England Elevens, 3 were on the All England side against from 18 to 22 in the field, 2 were North and South matches, and the other 4 were first-class country matches.

Such an average is great indeed; and therefore hundreds of amateurs hastened both to Lord's and the Oval to witness the play by which so much was achieved.

But the strange part of the story is that no small proportion of old players and admitted judges were disappointed, and said, 'What! is this Mr. Grace? Is this the style by which so much has been done? This is by no means the play from which we have been accustomed to expect great results.'

The question is, which is right, Mr. Grace, or his critics?

Mr. Grace can appeal to 40 runs an innings, and may say, 'It is time to adjust your standard to fit the fact of my play. If my style is not counted good play, it is high time it were.'

To that argument we reply that, on the same ground, we saw a gallant officer (who was wounded in the Crimea) playing very well with one hand; but is that any proof that both hands on the bat is not the more likely style to answer? No.

There is such a thing as the right, a winning style of play, though much has been done for a season or two with the wrong.

The exception taken to Mr. Grace's play is, that he does not play straight, and that he does sometimes play across wicket, and makes divers 'guess hits' hitting for the rise, before he sees what that rise will be. By this last error we saw him lose two innings, and deserve to lose a third. But even with these two innings thus reduced, his average is 40 still!

Once more; with all the luck

there is in cricket, no man ever saw another make 50 runs in a good match, unless there was not only luck but good play. How, then, do we reconcile with the defects of his play Mr. E. Grace's scores?

1. Though Mr. Grace does not play as straight as Wisden, Hearn, or Mr. Trail (few do), nor any straighter than Iddison, or than Griffith did, before his improved style of this season, he plays straighter than he appears to play. His mode of taking up his bat is peculiar and very unplayer-like, giving the idea of crop-play; still many men have had some brilliant seasons without the straightest of play, and why not Mr. Grace?

2. As to his guess hits—but too common at the present day—we can only suppose that he usually is rather sparing of them; else that he reserves them till 'his eye is well in,' and he has observed the uniform break or rise of the ball. One or two wild hits make a great impression on the lookers-on, and the fact of an average of 40 makes us think the habit is overstated.

3. As to hitting across wicket; where you can neither see the rise or command the pitch of the ball, this play, though dangerous, is quite compatible with long scores, while the eye is keen and the player in daily practice; though all experienced cricketers distrust such play for a continuance. Mr. Grace knows well enough when he is, and when he is not, 'playing the game;' and no doubt every mishap tends to bring him down to steady play. He plays for the sport, and not like the professionals for a livelihood; so no wonder if he does sometimes indulge in 'sensation' hits.

The great advantage he has over almost all of the great players of the day is, that he has got up his play very early in life. His skill has been attained before hand and eye have lost their quickness, or the days of superfluous buoyancy and elastic tissues have passed away. Mr. Grace played well at thirteen years of age—being one of a family of cricketers, playing together in their own field as soon almost as they could hold a bat. Add to this

he is the right build for a cricketer; strong and active, a fast runner, and good thrower. In all sports or feats of manual dexterity, the great point is that hand and eye be early educated to act spontaneously together; and for Mr. Grace the ball never seems too quick; and in his back play he has always time enough and to spare. But let no one suppose that fine play comes without painstaking. Though young in years he is old in experience; for early training, proverbially, goes furthest.

We strongly suspect that many batsmen fail in long scores from want of condition, both to do justice to the eye, and also to do the running. A man out of wind is shaky and distressed, and unequal to that concentrated energy and attention on which a strong defence or accurate hitting depends. And twenty-two is a fair age for running; though men only a few years older feel a great difference. They do not recover so soon or so completely after the exhaustion of one or two fours. Caffyn, John Lillywhite, and Julius Caesar have rarely made the scores they made when under or about the age of

twenty-two; and Parr was in the All England Eleven when only eighteen. We suspect, therefore, that many a fine cricketer is lost by being put in training too late.

Add to this Mr. Grace takes no stimulus, not even tea; he plays upon water, and smokes not at all. Cricket requires a cool head, and, above all other qualities, concentration of the mind, as well as nervous energy; and few players are aware of the many innings that have been marred by that jaundiced eye which results from beer, or by that devil-may-care humour which is caused by tobacco, as well as by liquor of all kinds: any old sportsman knows the effect of beer on the 1st of September. The man who boasts 'he can only play after a glass,' or who drinks and smokes for mere idleness, must never hope to play with the cool confidence, the strong nerve, or the steady hand and eye of E. Grace. True, wine cheers the heart of man, and a cigar relieves the fretted brain; but surely all needful stimulus for youth ought to be found in the cricket-field alone.

LOBSTER SALAD.

BY A CRUSTACEAN ARTIST.

SHOWING THAT LOBSTERS ARE ALWAYS IN SEASON, AND WHERE THEY ARE FOUND:

WITH FULL DIRECTIONS HOW TO SELECT AND COOK,
AND PARTICULARLY HOW TO DIGEST, THEM.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT I HAD FOR SUPPER.

ALL the travelling world are fully aware—at least those who visit Berlin—and who does not, now the daughter of our beloved Queen has made her home there?—as are many who live at home at ease, and read, that a Germanic appetite ripens about mid-day, and is in full gastronomic force about 3 P. M., between which hours I believe I am far from incorrect in stating that the whole city of Berlin—that is to say, every inhabitant it contains, from the humblest artisan

to those who dwell in hotels and palaces—go through the pleasant ordeal of that sensual indulgence vulgarly called dining, in support of nature. It mattereth little whether the repast commences with oysters and chablis, glides into iced champagne and salmis, terminating with mocha and curaçao, or whether the gastronomic indulgence be simply greasy soup, sausages, and sauerkraut—they dine.

This gratification concluded, the whole male sex, and at times I

greatly fear the softer sex, are wont to assist digestion by a soothing narcotic dose of tobacco. It mattereth little whether in a meerschäum, a rose-briar, cigar, or cigarette, taken it is—of course only medicinally and narcotively—by ninety out of every hundred of the subjects of the monarch who declares he holds the Prussian sovereignty by the will of God, and not by the voice of the people. Meanwhile, my subject being shell-fish, and not politics, I decline to discuss the question.

As they smoke they luxuriate—as who does not?—in somnolent feelings, the usual attendants of repletion and tobacco-juice; and thus they slumber till the shades of evening announce that another sun has set. It is then time, full time, to be up and at work again, whether for pleasure or profit—generally speaking, the pleasure takes precedence—and they arise from a horsehair sofa or an easy chair, or at times a hard bench, and go forth, some to the Opera, some to the theatre, some to Kroll's garden, some to far worse places, to imbibe beer, in long glasses—at times truly bitter beer—and smoke more tobacco. What satisfactory digestions they must have! how I envy them!

On the occasion, however, to which I desire more particularly to allude—being desirous to do at Berlin as do the Berlinites—having dined, I went to the Opera; and then and there reclining in a very comfortable orchestral stall, much at the time to the benefit of my inward man, whatever the subsequent effect, I enjoyed the well-appointed, and well-danced ballet of 'Flick und Flock.' I believe that most strangers who have visited Berlin during the last year or two are as well aware as every inhabitant of that constitutional and beer-loving city, that the scene opens with the appearance of a remarkably fine lobster—I know not where caught, or by whom boiled—whose claws not having been cracked for conversion into a mayonnaise, or salad, or sauce, or pegged to prevent injury to the fingers of cooks or mankind in general, are actively

made use of to the personal inconvenience of any and every individual on the stage with whom the marine intruder may come in contact—said lobster being surrounded by one of the most pleasing displays of female understandings I ever beheld.

The amusement terminated, I blushingly admit that a combination of lobsters and female charms, soothed by sweet music, took possession of my senses—the former at length preponderating; that nothing could suffice me, on retiring to my hotel, but a lobster salad, the only company being the lobster and self. In fact, I was fully determined, ere I sought my uncomfortable Prussian bed (in which I generally found myself without any covering when morning broke), to sacrifice one of the lobster tribe to my anger or pleasure—I scarcely recollect which—for the pinches he of the ballet had inflicted on graceful ankles for my amusement.

At length I solved the problem by determining that the only way of giving ample satisfaction to ankles and appetite was to eat up for supper the largest lobster in the house; but, alas! after leaving nothing but wreck behind, against all the rules of gastronomy, I washed it down with a pint of villanous Hockheimer, at a thaler a bottle. Oh, miserable economy! instead of this, I should have subdued the indigestive effects of the rosy shell-fish with a bottle of Burgundy, or a glass of the purest old cognac, hot with, or, what is far better, a sneezer of good old English Tom, hot without. The result was awful. Scarce had I placed my head on a soft pillow than I snoozed. Ah, what a painful snooze, and cruel dreams came across my fevered imagination. Alas, that wretched night! Shall I ever cease to deplore the rash act I committed? Perhaps the lobster was scarcely fresh. I might, being alone, have eaten too fast. Be it as it may, the horrid dream I experienced is fresh on my memory, and I give it here. It was, my friends, the cause of my writing on the lobster. Not that I attribute the evil effects of that miserable night of dark November

entirely to the lobster or the Hockheimer, but a combination of mental excitement, created by a curious taste in my palate, which induced me to imagine he was not precisely in season, which I shall, however, hereafter convince my readers was an error; neither do I consider they affect the digestive powers disagreeably, if eaten with care; for although doctors differ on the subject of crustacean food, as they do on every other subject, I am bold enough to assert that lobsters taken alive from the briny ocean, mixed with crisp, fresh-cut lettuce, from which the dew of heaven has been shaken, with a well-compounded sauce, of which I shall supply ample receipts, the acidity being corrected by a tumbler, as I have said—or even two—of London old Tom, hot without, has no evil effects whatever on the human interior, but rather creates delicious slumbers, combined with those soft and soothing mental creations which float around your pillow, as you lie half-waking, half-sleeping, and from which we all know the agony of being aroused on some dull, cold, drizzling morning, to be told you have just sixteen minutes to shave and pack, and jump into a damp cab, to be off to the railway on a line you hate to travel on.

CHAPTER II.

A NIGHT IN A LOBSTER CAVERN.

My dream! I recollect it with a vividness—even though I have since crossed the Atlantic, to say nothing of having visited half the capitals of Europe—which needs no revarnishing to bring out its agonizing records; and for many a month subsequent to the event—fiction, or the mere effects of a feverish imagination, as it might be—I looked on a lobster with a shudder, and turned from a mayonnaise, or salad, or pâté with disgust. Indeed, having on one occasion helped myself to a lobster curry—fancying it was salmon—I was well-nigh putting the whole table into hysterics by

the loud manner in which I expressed my abhorrence of the act.

The day previous to that fatal night of the lobster I had parted with a friend whom I will call Tatton, he being *en route* for the city of the Czar, while I was about to return to my fatherland, Old England. It was, as far as I can recollect, about two A.M., when, turning on my back after several restless rollings in bed from this side to that, I at last went off into a heavy, dull, feverish sleep, methought I was returning with him from a London theatre about midnight, that the cravings of hunger, or let me describe it in less vulgar terms, a desire for gastronomic indulgence, came over us. I do not clearly recollect, after this lapse of time, whether it was he or I who uttered the meritorious suggestion that we should purchase a couple of lobsters—and the fact is not important. We secured them and pocketed them, and having done so speedily attained his lodgings in the West. No sooner arrived, after a successful hunt for the lucifer-matches, than Tatton humorously hinted that I should make myself useful, which I did by spreading the table-cloth, by depriving two porter bottles of the wires which secured the corks, and then handing him sundry bottles which contained the condiments or liquids necessary for the concoction of a most appetizant sauce—as if we required an appetite. This done, he proceeded in a most artistic manner, with hammer and knife, to dissect the succulent and nourishing shell-fish, splitting them from head to tail, but carefully avoiding the escape of any of the valuable contents of the interior or red berries—they were females—terminating with a hearty laugh, as he turned to me, and with a comic expression of countenance, as if he gloated in their torture, asked if I had ever seen a lobster boiled. On my replying in the negative, and at the same time adding that I was perfectly satisfied by their rosy colour that they had possibly been compelled to undergo the painful ordeal, he added, with another diabolical ‘Ha, ha!’ which

Drawn by Darley.

LOBSTER SALAD—A HOLIDAY SKETCH.

even now, while I write these lines, sounds hideously in my ears, as it did on that dreadful night—

‘You may well say painful ordeal. Have you ever tried the effects of being boiled alive?’

‘No.’

‘Well, let me tell you. They squeak like young pigs, in a tenor, shrill tone—ha, ha, ha!—and then they open their claws, and spread out their tails like a fan—grow red in the face, then red all over, and end in an upside-down roll in the boiling and bubbling water. Such capital fun, I assure you—lively, very! Cut the lettuce carefully,’ continued Tatton—‘not too large, nor too small’ (we had also secured two crisp lettuces, it being the commencement of the lobster season, when our sincere allies in Paris invariably supply Covent Garden market with that excellent and sanitary green food called the Roman lettuce, unquestionably the best for the concoction of lobster salads), while he carefully spooned out the soft, delicate, and creamy substance from the animal’s interior, as he did so, calmly adding, ‘Did you ever think of the sensations of a lobster’s interior when the hot water penetrates it?—ha, ha!—and how about his poor legs? I am not surprised at his squeaking—are you?’

And thus in our mad humour we joined in a boisterous laugh, while I was carefully extracting the delicious flesh from the shelly cavities of the animal, the recital of whose dying agonies had caused my friend so much enjoyment. I must confess that I felt somewhat sad when I calmly considered the amount of agony inflicted on animals for the daily sustenance—ay, let me rather say, the gastronomic indulgences and sensual gratifications of man—yes, and lovely woman also. These philanthropic reflections, however, by no means appeared to deter me from partaking copiously of the salad; and we terminated the night—I deplore to write it, though truth compels me to admit the fact, dream though it be—that is to say, about three A.M., we sang together in admirable time and tune, ‘My pretty Jane,’ in a sort of

lachrymose, falsetto voice, under the exciting influence of two quart bottles of Guinness, and about three tumblers each of gin, hot with, and only one knob of sugar—an explanation of course necessary for my lady readers, though ‘tis only a dream—and we swore eternal friendship, shook hands about half a dozen times, and said good-night, retiring to bed quite sober of course, not even ‘light,’ as our American friends have it.

It might have been about four A.M., I cannot positively assert the time, when I thought that streams of hot oil ran down me, and I felt an oppressive weight on my chest. I tried to kick, but my legs refused to move, and then a horrible vision appeared to me. Methought I was awake, and that on my breast I saw two juvenile lobsters flapping their tails, and ever and anon crawling up to my face, and playfully, only playfully, pinching my nose with their claws. In vain I endeavoured to cast them from me, as one does a blue-bottle fly; no sooner did I lay hold of one than he slipped, like an eel, through my fingers.

‘You had better lie quiet,’ squeaked the youngest and smallest, in a most insolent tone. ‘You have no power over us whatever; we are rapidly growing larger; and ere long we shall be strong enough to carry you off.’

Oh, horror of horrors! ‘Take me where?’ I exclaimed.

‘Ha! ha! ha!’ they responded, ‘you will soon see.’ And as I spake they appeared to become larger and larger, until they rolled off me with a heavy crash, like the clattering of armour, and stood erect by my bedside on their tails. The dark-purple scaly wretches appeared to me at least six feet high, with corresponding giant-like claws, which seemed to be more fitted to crush iron or stone, than flesh and bones.

‘Get up, get up,’ said the larger and darker of the two, staring at me with his protruding eyes, which penetrated my heart’s core with agonized feelings. ‘Get up, I say, and come with us. The night is very cold; we shall not allow you to dress.’

'But for goodness' sake, or for decency's sake,' I replied, 'allow me to put on my unmentionables, that is, my merino drawers.'

'Bosh,' was the answer. 'We have to slip our clothing periodically, and go about with far less than a shirt. Your merino drawers be ——.' I cannot write the word. And as he uttered them, both he and his companion seized me in their sharp claws, and walked me, in my wretched *deshabille*, helplessly between them. Ere I left the room, however, I must add that they crammed my nightcap into my mouth, to prevent my roaring or squeaking, as they said, for help, causing me the most painful sensations of suffocation, especially as the tassel had gone far into my throat, and thus they dragged me through a long muddy lane. Alas, how dreadful were my sufferings! and yet my mind seemed to work even in my sleep, causing me to think that, did I escape from their clutches, I would boil some score of them, and convert them into salads, curries, and patties. And I all but made up my mind to invite the whole of Europe and America to a lobster-salad supper—Palmerston on my right hand, and Lincoln on my left.

Meanwhile, Messrs. Lobster led, or rather dragged me onwards, lacerating my flesh with their sharp claws. Scarcely could I move one leg before the other. My ears began to burn and swell; my brain was literally on fire.

'We do not intend to hurt you much now,' exclaimed the smaller shell-fish, who hitherto had silently clawed me; 'but we shall punish your friend severely.'

'But you do hurt me abominably,' I observed very meekly; 'look at my ears how they bleed. I will walk quietly between you; but do, I beseech you, take off your hands.' This I remarked in my agony, weakly imagining that I should flatter them by dropping the word claws.

'Claws, sir! claws!' bawled the big one; 'we have no hands, as you very well know, when you ruthlessly smash our claws and

extract therefrom the creamy, luscious, nutritive food which forms, barring our thighs, the most delicious portion of your gastronomical midnight debauches, or I should rather say, matutinal orgies, forgetful of our agony, while you destroy us by hundreds, leaving our children to mourn in the briny ocean. Claws, sir; come on.' My supplications were in vain. Onwards I was pulled, while they walked majestically on their tails, the brutes, until we came to the entrance of a rocky cavern, where I beheld—ah, excruciating horror!—a large caldron suspended from the roof, under which played and crackled a bright wood fire. Here I was desired to take a seat—with only a shirt on, recollect, and that unfortunately one of my shortest—on a heap of nutmeg graters.

In this miserable plight I gazed with agony of mind on the caldron. I heard the blazing wood crackle, and saw the sparks fly upwards; I thought of pleasant lobster suppers, past, never to recommence, and listened to the roaring, boiling, bubbling water. No other sound met my fevered brain and lacerated ears, till the voice of my unfortunate companion, Tatton, came like an earthquake on my sinking heart, crying aloud in frenzied exclamations for help; and forthwith I beheld him carried in on the back of an enormous lobster—a dark-purple monster—kicking and screeching furiously, while several smaller wretches were vigorously employed alternately pinching his legs, arms, and body with their claws.

Alas! poor fellow! how boisterously he howled! how shrill were his cries for mercy! how he kicked and fought! it was all of no use. Tom Sayers or the Benicia Boy would have been mere shrimps in their claws. At last he was thrown on the stony cavern floor, while the largest lobster, in a commanding voice, exclaimed, 'All's ready; it boils hard.'

'What!' exclaimed Tatton, almost shrieking, 'do you really mean—?' looking piteously at the caldron.

'Ha, ha, ha!' shouted the big

brute; 'do we mean? Do you mean, when you boil us by scores? Of course we mean. Did you ever see a man boiled alive? Of course you have seen many a lobster. You express its sensations so practically. They squeak like pigs, ay! We shall hear how you squeak.'

'Ha, ha, ha! and they spread out their tails, and their odious claws, and roll their protruding eyes. Ha, ha! and how red they get in the face. Your face is pale enough now, my gentleman. We shall see the effect of boiling it.'

Conceive my position, as I sat, or endeavoured to sit, bruised and bleeding on the nutmeg graters, without daring to move; indeed, I could scarcely move from fright, anger, and pain combined; moreover, without the power to aid my friend. Indeed, I fully imagined we were both about to be boiled alive. The lobsters were too many for us. Alas, how ghastly Tatton looked on the floor! how violently he trembled! Drops of agony seemed to fall from his forehead; his hands were as purple as the lobster's claws.

'You need not give yourself the trouble to undress,' said one of the brutal crustacea. It appeared they had seized him ere he had taken off his clothes, or the gin potations had caused him to be neglectful of that usual process ere he got into bed.

On hearing this, I could no longer contain myself, but plucking up courage, as I wriggled till the blood almost streamed from my denuded person, on the nutmeg graters, I exclaimed, in a subdued and half-choking voice, 'My good friends, most amiable crustacean gentlemen and ladies, why that caldron? you really do not mean to b-b-boil him.'

'Good friends! amiable crustaceans! bosh, I say again,' roared the big lobster, who was evidently the superior, the grandfather, for aught I know, of the lobster tribe. 'Good eating we are, you mean, when boiled.'

'Ha, ha, ha!' exclaimed all the lobsters, now gathering around him, and giving him an occasional pinch, to remind him of his living

individuality. 'Don't mean to boil him! Of course we do. Has he anything to say to his wife or children, parents or friends, ere we cast him into the caldron? It is thus we are served by male cooks in white caps, and female cooks with red noses.'

'Ye—ye—yes,' muttered poor Tatton in a faint, mild voice, making an effort to tickle the lobster nearest to him under the armpit, that is to say, the clawpit. 'Ye—yes. Spare me, my good fellows. I swear in future to respect your race. I will eat no more lobster-salads, no more lobster-curries, no more lobster anything. I renounce lobster eating for ever. I will get into Parliament, and bring in a bill proving that lobsters can no longer be considered as food for the human species. Henceforth I will confine myself wholly and solely to oyster suppers and half-and-half.'

'No more gammon,' said one of the young lobsters; 'time flies. Put him in, granddad. Let's hear him squeak like a young pig. Open his claws, spread out his tail—grow red in the face; he is white enough now. Give him an upside-down roll in the bubbling water. Such capital fun!—lively, very. Then we'll eat him. How jolly!'

'Hold your tongue, boy,' said the big lobster. 'And you, sir,' turning to Tatton, 'do you remember your words when smashing two of our fellow-creatures to satisfy your craving appetite, while that fellow on the graters there cut up the lettuces and opened the porter?'

'Oh yes, sir! I assure you it was all a joke. I pity your sufferings from my heart, although my gastronomic feelings may have caused me to err. I regret having unwittingly offended you. Have mercy!'

'Bah!' replied the big lobster, 'for centuries past our race have suffered at your hands. We suffered and submitted as little boys at school submit to big bullies; but we have caught one of you at last; and may your fate be a warning to the lobster boiling and eating world at large!' And with these words he clawed him up, and holding him for

half a minute, spite his convulsive efforts to escape, dropped him with a tremendous splash into the boiling, bubbling water of the caldron. The shrieks of agony which followed were awful. I fainted—that is, I mean to say I awoke, to find myself lying on my back in my shirt in a heavy perspiration, and turning on my side beheld a ‘kellner,’ that is, a German boots, in his shirt sleeves, who was splashing and pouring an immense pitcher of cold water into my matutinal bath, while, the door being open, he was complaining in a loud voice to another kellner, who ought to have been cleaning boots, but who was doing nothing in the passage, as to the absurdity of English travellers feeling it necessary to wash themselves matutinally, thus causing him to drag up large pitchers of water from the Spey, which ran hard by my hotel. It was the splash, doubtless, of this water into my bath which terminated my horrid dream, to say nothing of the chattering boots.

Dreams are indeed oftentimes very strange: nothing, indeed, appears too absurd for a dream. Nevertheless, the effects not seldom remain for days together on the mind, leading occasionally to unforeseen events, or rather confirming the saying that coming events cast their shadows before. My bath filled, I turned calmly on my side, and slept deliciously for an hour, when, having dressed and hailed the new-born day, I proceeded to breakfast, but no lobster; the dream literally haunted me. Time and patience, however, get through the longest and most dreary day, as does it many other unpleasant phases in life’s career. I have long since taken courage, and eat, have eaten, and intend to eat no end of lobsters and lobster salads. And as I have a fellow-feeling for all men, I wish them to become better acquainted with the animal Lobster in its natural state and in its gastronomic excellencies. Therefore I sing of the Lobster.

LADY FELICIA.

PERFECT in graceful luxury was the room,
Replete with beauty, laden with perfume
Lavished from flowers half drooping with their bloom.

Lady Felicia, rich, high-born, and fair,
Reclining in her velvet-cushioned chair,
Her jewelled fingers toying with her hair,—

Dreamed, as all women dream, and none but they:—
Duchess and peasant—girl and matron gray,
Each hath her dream,—from which she wakes, one day

And thus Felicia sat alone, and dreamed
Some pleasant noon-tide fantasy, it seemed,
So soft the lustre in her eyes that beamed.

‘Others may love in sunshine,—I would fain
Share, rather than my loved one’s joy, his pain,
That I might soothe his heart to peace again.

‘Others may care for riches—but to me
It seems that to be poor is to be free;
And Love is mightiest in adversity.

‘Who will may have world-splendour, rank, and power;
Let *me* be to my love his life’s one flower,
Sole cherished in an else deserted bower

Drawn by E. K. Johnson.

LADY FELICIA.

(See the Poem.)

' For trouble doth two spirits much unite :
In grief, true love gives forth so clear a light,
As stars glow brightest in the darkest night.

' Together, there's no ill that we need dread :
Though wrathful clouds should gather overhead,
Through darkness each by each would safe be led.

' Together, we might dare all storms of Fate,
And for returning calm in faith would wait ;—
So love doth strengthen—and doth consecrate.

' Clad in this armour proof—so true, so sure,
We should be brave to combat and endure,
And through all tainting struggle might pass, pure

' Right proud were I love's burdens so to bear—
Right fondly would I claim all pain to share—
Striving alway to ease his every care.

' And when a-weary with the world's hard strife,
He should come *home*, as to a holier life,
Finding sweet rest and peace with me—his wife !'

Upon the word Felicia paused awhile,
And o'er her face a gleam, half blush, half smile,
Stole—trying its sweet gravity to beguile.

Till lips, eyes, cheeks, their lesson had been taught,
And the reflection of her rosy thought
Even her dimpled neck had faintly caught.

The eyes drooped presently, their lashes wet,—
Ah, complex thoughts!—tumultuously they met,
While the low whisper came,—' And yet—and yet—?'

The yearning, asking words were all—no more,—
A gentle hand unclosed the chamber door ;
Felicia started up,—her day-dream o'er.

' Nugent is waiting, dear, to say good-bye—
He's going off to Spain, immediately.'
Felicia, white, but stately, uttered—' Why,

' That's sudden, isn't it ?' and tried to look
Calm, in her mother's eyes. Her mother took
Her soft hands, softly ;—then the young girl shook

From head to foot, in desperate undisguise,
Until the tender voice said—' What is this,
My darling ?' melting in a long, fond kiss.

' So cold to him, we thought. Yet—is it so ?
You—love him ?' On the pale cheek came a glow.
Felicia whispered, ' I—I did not know——'

Then, like a frightened bird that seeks its nest,
She drooped her head upon her mother's breast,
And in faint sobbings told her all the rest.

* * * *

And Nugent is of lowly birth, of course—
A struggling Worker—artist, or e'en worse,
Perhaps a poet, with a poet's purse ?

And she will be his cherished flower—his light,
Sole shining on the darkness of the night,
To help and solace him through Life's sore fight?

Ah!—womanly consistency's a pearl
Of infinite rareness. She was but a girl
Who dreamed that dream, the while she loved—the Earl.

Yes, one of England's proudest. Wealth and power
Are hers, who, dreaming in that idle hour,
Aspired to love, as life's sufficient dower,—

And dared to *wish* for sorrow, pain, and care.
Alas! fair Countess, these come everywhere—
To golden palace, as to hovel bare.

While Love, the strengthening and healing one,
Shineth on all as he hath ever shone—
Dwells in a hut, but does not spurn a throne.

Drawn by M. Moran.

ALONE WITH THE TIDE.—A SEA-SIDE SKETCH.

LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER, 1863.

MR. TRAFFORD CARR'S BUSINESS JOURNEY.

A *Realistic Romance*.

CHAPTER I.

'WHAT A PIECE OF IMPERTINENCE!'

ADDINGTON train, sir? No, sir. One twenty, half an hour to wait.'

Half an hour to wait! and he had already waited till his patience was exhausted. How was he to get through another thirty minutes? The Sydenham trousers had ceased to interest him; the instructions of Mr. Rodgers for self-measurement struck him as disgustingly importunate; the point blank inquiries as to why he persisted in suffering, when, for a certain number of postage stamps a cure might be obtained for any and every evil under the sun, seemed to him positively insolent; and yet he had nothing to do but to examine them. It wasn't his fault, but the fault of Mr. Bradshaw, whom, as he would have said just then, no fellah could understand, and his time was really precious.

He walked up the platform and put one foot lazily on the portmanteau labelled with his name—Trafford Carr; he watched, lazily also, the unloading of a train just arrived from the terminus to which he was bound: he stood back against the wall to keep out of the crowd of scared-looking passengers who knew where they wanted to go perhaps, but had not the remotest idea how to get there, and who were one and all personally injured by the neglect of the harassed porters.

Mr. Carr was a Saxon-looking man, with blue eyes that twinkled just now with a gleam of amusement which perhaps he did not care to hide, as he looked at the motley assemblage fuming and fretting before him. He had brown hair which curled, and a moustache which would not curl, and he was twisting the latter into all sorts of odd contortions, when a little child ran foul of the portmanteau and tumbled over it.

'Confound the whole crew of nursemaids!' muttered Mr. Carr, picking up the child nevertheless, and setting it on a pair of unsteady legs. As he stooped for this purpose, it seemed that something in the pile of unclaimed luggage on the platform caught his eye, and he started forward to examine it more closely.

'Claim your luggage, please,' shouted an official voice at his ear.

'That yours, sir?'

'No!' said Mr. Carr. 'Wait a bit.'

He was bending down over a holland-covered package, and had actually turned the leather address case round, so that he might be quite sure of its contents, when a gentleman's silver-topped cane fell with rather a smart rap upon the trunk, and a gentleman's voice ejaculated sharply, 'Mine, sir.'

Mr. Carr had the grace to redden, and to gulp down the insane desire he felt to retort, 'You tell a fib, sir.' For he did not believe that the package in question belonged to this gentleman, nor yet to his sister, who stood beside him—his very image—frowning down her haughty indignation upon the inquisitive interloper.

'I beg your pardon,' muttered Mr. Carr. He got a nod from the young man, and he had the comfort of hearing the lady say, with tolerable distinctness, 'What a piece of impertinence!'

Mr. Trafford Carr went back to his portmanteau, but the half-hour which a minute ago had seemed so interminable a period, suddenly became a brief span, passing all too quickly for the whirl of thoughts in his head to shape themselves. The brother and sister were personally unknown to him, but the big 'Rivers' which marked some of the luggage struck him as familiar in connection with the name he had examined in that leather case. Was the owner of the name travelling with these people? And if so, whither? And what was it to him?

Business called him to town; in fact, it was business with his lawyers, the importance of which it had never occurred to him to doubt until now. But after all, what could they possibly want with him? He knew nothing of legal matters; he could not be of the least practical use, nor his presence of the least importance. Indeed, it was very probable that they would manage a great deal better without him than with him. He began to feel rather angry with his lawyers and aggrieved at the

notion of obeying their summons. And at this juncture the brother and sister passed him again.

'You see to the luggage, Antony,' said the latter; 'I am going to look for mamma and Ellinor.'

A sudden contraction of Mr. Carr's face, and a whiteness which came over it just then, announced that his resolution was taken. A mad resolution, perhaps, formed on a moment's impulse, but not to be moved. He followed the sister at a distance down the platform, and saw some one join her—an elderly lady and a young one. As the face of this latter turned for a moment in his direction, he drew a sharp breath and stood still, but she did not see him. They were getting into one of the carriages of a train going directly out of the fangs of his lawyers. He walked on quickly and became aware that his fingers were trembling as he reached the telegraph office and dictated a rapid message concerning sudden business which made it impossible for him to be in town that day; then he passed through the booking-office, caught up his portmanteau, and made a rush for a carriage just as the cry of 'Take your seats, please,' and the sound of fastening doors had nearly driven him wild with the fear of losing the train altogether. Even now he was not out of the worry.

'This is not your train, sir,' said the porter, who had just before given him half an hour to wait.

'It is,' responded Mr. Carr, exasperated.

'Let me see your ticket, please,' pursued the unbelieving porter.

Mr. Carr produced it.

'All right, sir. Thought you were for Paddington.'

Once seated, and having got over the slight awkwardness of throwing himself upon a lady's bonnet-box, blue as to colour and frail in constitution, he took off his hat and composed himself to think. But in the first place, he felt uncomfortably warm; in the next, uneasily conscious that the owner of the bonnet-box was alternately rubbing up the injured article and casting glances of deadly hatred upon its injurer; and in the third and last place, what

would thinking do for him but strengthen the disagreeable idea beginning to suggest itself already, that he had made a most unaccountable simpleton of himself? And what was to come of it? Here he was in for a four hours' journey, whose terminus would, he believed, be a sea-side resort, the very existence of which, one single hour ago, had been scarcely known to him and of no significance at all in his eyes.

'It's the old story,' thought Mr. Trafford Carr. 'The same abominable rashness and pig-headed obstinacy that sent me into such a mess three months ago, and made me wretched for life; as if——'

'I beg your pardon, sir, but if you *could* put your feet a little on one side of the birdcage——'

'Oh!' ejaculated Mr. Carr, 'certainly.'

First a bonnet-box and then a birdcage, and the voice of this most irritating female was like a nutmeg-grater to the ears of the unhappy man. What business had she with a birdcage under the seat, with bonnet-boxes, and packets, and cloaks, and black bags literally filling up all the arm-chairs in the carriage; and umbrellas or parasols, whichever they were, and papers of sandwiches stuck about the 'cradle?' Would she speak again? Did he actually see symptoms of a relenting temper and an impending attempt at conversation? Was it on the cards that he should be confidentially informed of the extent of her journey, its cause—probably ailments which would be detailed? Mr. Carr was an Englishman, and he was worried. He stuck his travelling cap over his eyes, put his head into a corner, folded his arms and went to sleep or shammed, which was, after all, quite as good for him as thinking.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRAVELLING PHOTOGRAPHER.

'It smells fresh, even to me,' thought Mr. Trafford Carr, taking off his hat and letting the air blow upon his head; 'and I'm not used up either like some fellows, nor

blanched by town residence. There comes a packet. What a line she leaves in the water, and what cockle-shells she makes the little boats look! I should like a row, but not to-night.'

It was just seven o'clock in the evening, and the sun was kissing the bay by way of salute before the mountains hid them; and the long unbroken crescent with which, in its various modifications, we are all familiar, began to wake up from its afternoon drowsiness and to turn out for promenade.

Mr. Carr might have seen, as he sauntered along the parade, hundreds of ladies well dressed, and hundreds culpably defying all harmonies of style and colour; hats of all dimensions, from the absurdly shadeless turban and sailor to the broadest flapping Tuscan; and crinolines in every variety of size and awkwardness; but he did not observe these things. There might have been more attraction in the shimmering of the water where the sun touched it, or the gentle rise and fall of the many boats lying at anchor in the bay, or the murmur of those melancholy things which the sea is always whispering to the shore, but Mr. Carr was not thinking of this either. He felt its influence no doubt indirectly, but he was pre-occupied. He went up to the parade railing, fashioned after the manner somewhat of the London park barriers, and leaned against it. A band or two passed him with their music-stands and instruments, and one of them fixed up the programme for the evening exactly opposite his leaning place.

A sudden thought occurred to Mr. Carr as he saw this. Would it be of any use to put it in practice? He must consider it a little. So he stood there, lazily listening to 'Robert, toi que j'aime,' and three ladies looked out upon him from the drawing-room of Heidelberg House, in full view of which he stood.

These three ladies had an air of being newly arrived, and were probably too much fatigued to join the motley of the promenade. To forestall the 'Visitors' List,' their names had been given to the landlady as Mrs. and Miss Rivers, and Miss Challis; added to these, came Mr.

Antony Rivers, the gentleman who was just now testing the softness of a yellow couch at the extreme end of the room. Their names having been duly chronicled, however—a social duty—these new visitors became to the landlady nameless beings, their individuality merged in the general stream of coming and going guests: they were now simply 'The Drawing-room.'

It might have seemed strange to them, but their requirements and fatigues and pleasures, as persons, would have from henceforth no interest in the landlady's eyes. If the Drawing-room wanted anything, the Drawing-room rang its bell; and the Drawing-room was the department of a certain oppressed damsel, who lodged at night in a hole in the roof, and prayed for the season to be over.

'It isn't so bad—this sofa,' remarked Mr. Antony Rivers. 'Try it, old lady.'

By 'old lady,' Mr. Rivers meant his mother, and the only plea that can be urged in defence of the seeming disrespect is, that from his lips it signified affection.

'No, thank you, Tony. What a lazy fellow you are!'

'Exactly. What do people come to the seaside for?'

Miss Rivers suggested 'shrimps,' and her mother, who took things literally, said, 'Change of air and scene;' neither of which answers appeared to Mr. Antony deserving of notice.

'One comes to the seaside to be jolly,' he said: 'Sir Bulwer Lytton holds the elixir of life to be rest, by which, of course, he means profound laziness; and I think, myself, that it is one of the elements of jollity.'

Having said this he moved his head slightly, to improve his facilities for the study which was in reality occupying him. He was watching his cousin, Ellinor Challis. She sat against one of the window-curtains, so that he saw only her profile, and by-and-by not even that, for she suddenly put her hand up to her forehead, as though it ached, and kept it there. The *posé* suggested to Mr. Antony that she was aware of being observed, and he smiled.

'Tired, Ellinor?' he asked.

She lowered her hand and looked at him steadily.

'I don't like being stared at, Antony.'

Antony laughed outright, possibly to hide a little flush of mortification that came over his face. He had not seen Ellinor, until lately, for many years, and the change which those years had effected made it natural, he thought, that he should follow her movements with a little cousinly admiration.

'Well, my dear, I really do think the people stare a good deal,' said Mrs. Rivers, innocently. 'But the rudeness is theirs, you know, not ours.'

This time it was Ellinor's turn to smile, and Antony took it as a token of forgiveness.

'They can't see me, can they, mother? By the way, what a stupid thing it was to let that woman get hold of Mr. Antony Rivers for the paper. I might have been Don Antonio de Rivaz, and have had a chance of getting looked at. I wonder if it's too late.'

'Be quiet, Tony,' said his sister; 'and, Ellinor, look here; but don't let yourself be seen. Lower down, leaning against the railing. That's the impertinent fellow I told you of, who looked at our luggage with such cool assurance. What's the matter? He didn't see you, did he?'

'A travelling photographer,' drawled Antony, 'who has an eye to his profession. The old lady and you two shall sit to him for the Graces.'

'And now he is staring in here.'

'Don't mamma, pray; I wouldn't have him see that we recognize him for the world. It's the greatest piece of impertinence I ever knew.'

'These things,' began Mrs. Rivers sententiously, 'often happen without—'

'Is there anything in a name?' broke out Antony from the sofa; 'because, if so, I can tell you his.'

'You! And how did you know it?'

'Curious, Augusta. By using my eyes, to be sure. I looked at his

portmanteau, and I'm pretty nearly sure there was a Paddington label on it; so how he comes to be here I can't say.'

'Antony, you are as bad as he was. Talk of a woman's curiosity, indeed!'

Mr. Antony shrugged his shoulders indifferently. 'The name was Trafford Carr; queer, but not ill-sounding.'

'Trafford!' repeated Mrs. Rivers, slowly, catching only the first name. 'Wasn't there a Mr. Trafford, Ellinor: or, no, it was Stafford——'

Mrs. Rivers stopped abruptly. Her son had leaped from the sofa, with a bound that shook the room, and startled her into a little scream of consternation.

'A thousand pardons,' said Antony. 'I didn't mean to make such a noise, but I wanted to wake myself. You are astray, mother; the name of the travelling artist is Carr. Puts one in mind of biscuits, doesn't it? Most silent and absorbed cousin Ellinor, will you take a turn on the promenade?'

Ellinor Challis rose at once. A certain deference which distinguished Antony's manner to her at times could not fail to please her, in spite of the bantering manner that disguised it; moreover, he had just interfered to prevent inquiries which would have been painful, and she was grateful to him. Antony himself did not know this, or knew it but dimly. He could scarcely account for the impulse that had prompted his opportune interruption. He only knew that Ellinor had been ill, and that a rumour had gone about concerning an engagement abruptly and mysteriously broken off. It was most probably idle rumour, after all; but still he thought it well to stop his mother's researches when they turned upon his cousin's gentlemen acquaintance. But with the consciousness of having acted a sort of protector's part towards her, he conceived a sudden desire to know certainly the truth or falsehood of the rumour. And perhaps he was also a little elated by the alacrity with which she had responded to his proposal of a walk, for he took her hand, as he held open the door for her to pass

through, and said in his best and most insinuating manner—

'You won't bear malice, will you?'

His bit of mannerism shrank at once before the somewhat scornful amusement which tinged Ellinor's look and answer.

'Cousin Antony,' she said, glancing back at him, 'let me beg of you to believe that it is better to be natural than to affect absurdity.'

Antony was not used to rebuffs; and although he knew he had been pretending, yet it was not pleasant to be told so. Besides, Ellinor was very handsome, unusually so just then, when she looked a bit scornful; she was not often roused to look so. And what did it matter about the two years by which she was his senior? No one would take her for the eldest, particularly if they made proper allowance for his big whiskers and moustache. He wasn't quite so sure, now he came to think of it, that there had been no reality in his bit of sentiment. One thing, however, he was sure of, namely, that he should not venture to take her hand in that way very soon again.

'Upon my word,' mused Mr. Antony, 'I wonder she didn't box my ears. They almost feel as if she had.'

'Tony,' said Mrs. Rivers from the window, 'I don't think we ought to wait for Mr. George Rivers to call upon us. He might never see the names, you know, and your father would not be pleased if we went home without seeing him. I think you should go to the rectory.'

'To-night, mother?'

'You stupid boy. I am in earnest.'

'Very well. But the rector is nothing to me. Second cousins don't count, you know.'

'I wonder if he is as music-mad as ever,' said Mrs. Rivers, speculatively.

'Sure to be. That's a taste that doesn't die.'

'He would be pleased with Ellinor's voice. I want to make her sing again if I can. I want to rouse her in some way. Antony, we must get a piano, and have the

rector, or his son and daughters, or all, here.'

'Speaking of Ellinor,' said Antony, with an air of profound unconcern, 'I suppose there was nothing in that rumour. I mean about a broken engagement.'

Mrs. Rivers looked at him with a little bewilderment for a moment, and then she laughed.

'Nonsense, Antony! Mr. Challis sent Ellinor with us because she had not been well, and he thought the change would do her good. Of course I am very glad to have her.'

'Of course we are,' said Antony, generalizing it.

'And we must take care of her, and make her go out a good deal. She is very quiet. These slow, dragging indispositions are more likely to leave low spirits behind them than a sharp illness which is soon over. Then Ellinor has no mother, and a father may be everything that is wise and kind, but these seemingly slight ailments are beyond his ken. You must take Ellinor on the hills, you and Augusta; the air up there will put fresh life into her.'

'Then you think there was nothing in it, and there's no gentleman's head that I could have the pleasure of punching?'

'My dear Tony, don't be absurd. Put by your superfluous energy until it is wanted. Be off, and don't keep the girls waiting.'

CHAPTER III.

'IL BALEN.'

The sun was gone long ago, and the evening air blew up fresh from the sea along the parade. Mr. Trafford Carr had left his leaning position, and mixed amongst the shifting crowd of promenaders. He did not move with them, however, but kept pretty nearly to the same place, and he was just now occupied with a calculation as to the exact time it would take certain figures approaching in the distance to reach that place. These figures moved slowly. Mr. Rivers, the centre one of the three, had dropped into a saunter as meditative in its way as Mr.

Carr's immobility. Antony's efforts to make himself entertaining had been damped by the unpleasant conviction that the more he talked the more silent and absent Ellinor became. He could not decide to his own satisfaction whether he was in love, or going to be in love with his cousin, or not. Her supreme indifference piqued him; he was at the sea-side, and had nothing to do, and the temptation to amuse himself with a little flirtation was dangerous. He would have liked to know what Ellinor thought of him in her own mind; but the absolute blank which such a question would have produced might have been salutary but not palatable. She was not thinking about him at all; had never thought about him sufficiently to form an opinion. She walked by his side, and probably knew that he talked a good deal, but she left his sister to answer him. All at once something roused her from her apathy. It was growing late; the stars had begun to come out, and a light or two had sprung up in the windows along the parade. They were passing near to a famous string band engaged for the season, and the commencement of a well-remembered air from the 'Trovatore' made her turn with a movement of sudden pain towards the players. Then she saw that she had turned straight round upon the impertinent examiner of her luggage; that he was leaving the group around the musicians and coming to meet her; that his face was white and resolute, and that he meant to be seen. A spirit of pride and just anger stung her into strength. He came forward as though he had some claim upon her consideration; he would find it a mistake. Another moment and she had passed him, looking into his face with a single glance of determined unconcern, as though she had been passing a stranger. She walked on a little farther, and then stopped.

'Let us go in now,' said Ellinor. 'It is cold.'

Antony bent down to look at her with an unaccountable sensation of something strange in her voice.

'We have kept you out too long.'

he said. 'We must not do it again. Come, Augusta.'

Mrs. Rivers was waiting for them in the growing darkness of the drawing-room, but Ellinor went straight up to her own room and locked herself in.

She tried to throw off her cloak, but the fingers which worked at its fastening were trembling with anger or grief, or some passion strangely at variance with her usual impassability of manner; and in the midst of this sudden storm she was conscious of an hysterical inclination to laugh at the thought of what those quiet people down stairs would say if they could see her.

'He never meant coming here,' thought Ellinor, 'until he saw us. What have I done that I should be tormented in this way? He came on purpose. Ungenerous and cruel, he asked those men for "*Il Balen*" on purpose; he knew I should remember; he thinks, because I am a woman, that I shall be weak enough to forget his own words and my acquiescence in them. I never will. If he is come here to haunt me, I must show him that I can bear it, as I did to-night. Three months ago I knew he would be sorry, but he should have thought of that before. I wish I were really strong; these sudden excitements hurt me so. I am shaking all over; and I have got to go down stairs and look as if nothing was the matter.'

Meanwhile Mr. Trafford Carr walked on with a tingling in his cheeks and a feeling of bitter exasperation against everybody, the string band included. Ellinor was right; he had asked for '*Il Balen*' on purpose; and, now he came to think of it, the mistake had been a very foolish one. Well, it was done, and could not be recalled. But that reflection did not smooth down his vexation, nor modify the irritation with which he found his walk checked by the audience of an imitation Brousil family in full chorus. He took a dislike to the tiny violinists, and called their chorus discord, which was unjust, for they played very well. He had an unreasonable feeling of impatience against all those people who were

chattering and laughing around him; on one side a jabbering of French, on another the roll of an Italian sentence, and occasionally the German gutturals reaching his ear and bespeaking his unwilling attention to the talkers. His disgust reached its climax when he came upon a reverend brother Stiggins, who had taken up his post between the fires of two season bands, both being faintly audible at times, and was warning his dear friends, in a voice and language which might be called religious swearing, against the temptations of music in general, and this music in particular. To do justice to the good taste of the promenaders, Mr. Stiggins had a very thin audience, and these were small boys who stared at him in a bewildering state of uncertainty as to whether he really meant it or whether he was simply performing, like the imitation Brousils, and would presently send his hat round.

Mr. Carr turned away, and went to sit in the shadow of an old boat on the shingle. The tide was going out, and he flung into it a little box which he took from his pocket, and which had once contained patent '*Vesuvians*,' warranted safe from damp, from spontaneous ignition, or from any other evil to which matches in general are subject. And as the little vessel drifted off to sea, so his thoughts drifted away from the present, from Ellinor as she was now, a stony unreality, whom he had forfeited all claim to regard as anything but a stranger—to Ellinor as she was three months ago, before the cloud came.

And he remembered lying under a tree, lazily looking out upon sunny lawns until the sunshine came and stood before him visibly, and he pretended unconsciousness to see what she would do. Well, she went away from him quietly, without speaking. It was just like her. And then he had to run after her, and was angry, and they sparred a bit, and made it up again. Not much to remember, perhaps, but there was something very pleasant, and very bitter too, about it.

And then he remembered the jol-

liest Christmas party which had ever fallen to his lot; where there had been private theatricals, and plenty of bad acting which was applauded, and a little good acting which was not applauded; a faint suspicion of jealousy even then, but a good deal of that happiness which he supposed was all over now. The strange thing about it was that he never seemed to have appreciated it rightly until it was over. After that came a recollection so gloomy that his face lengthened under it, and he collapsed still further into the boat's shadow.

The glorious days of country freedom came to a close, and Ellinor went to town with her father. Mr. Carr followed, of course, and expected a monopoly, which he did not get. Mr. Challis required his daughter to pay some little attention to other friends, and Mr. Carr fretted himself into a furious fit of jealousy and unreasonable exaction. The thing which puzzled him now in this retrospect was, how he could ever have been so absurd. Then came that one-evening engagement which he had required Ellinor to break because he was not included in it; and when she argued the point Mr. Carr said something, in the passionate impulse of the moment, which Ellinor could not stand.

'If you think that,' she said, 'the sooner we say good-bye the better. And, indeed, I perfectly agree with you.'

She was very quiet about it; but Mr. Carr knew then that, even if his pride would have suffered him to appeal, there would be no moving her. There had been no question of friendship between them. Both knew that it would be impossible: both recognized the wideness of the gulf so suddenly opened between them. Mr. Carr saw it with a bewildered amazement—seeing, yet half incredulous. It was so monstrous; he had never contemplated such a thing; he did not know how to bear it when it came; and besides all this, it was his own doing.

'My fault,' muttered Mr. Carr, throwing whole handfuls of pebbles

at the unoffending sea. 'I did it all. I shut out *that* sort of sunshine from my life altogether. And yet I think, coming upon me so suddenly as she did yesterday—was it yesterday or to-day? I can hardly tell—I think it was scarcely wonderful that the temptation to follow for the chance of seeing her should have proved too much for me. I meant to humble myself, and that trick with the music was not humble. I am not sure that I am capable of any great humility. If I were to write to her she would return the letter unopened. I know her so well that I am certain she would, whether she cares for me or not—that is, unless I could disguise my hand, so that she might open it without knowing from whom it came. In that case—well, I must think of it. At any rate, I am here, and here I shall stay; and until I am positively certain that there is no hope, I won't give up.'

So Mr. Carr left his boat, and walked up and down opposite Heidelberg House until he saw, for one moment, a shadow on one of the drawing-room blinds, and then he went to his room at the 'Queen's.'

CHAPTER IV.

'IT'S A BOBBY IN DISGUISE.'

'And what about the practisings, Tony?'

'Oh, well, we must have a piano, of course. I'll run over to Foster's and get one this afternoon. Won't the people through the wall have a treat? I think we ought to charge. But, Augusta——'

'Well.'

'About that song, you know?'

'Ellinor says she would rather not sing it. If she is quite determined——'

'Quite,' interrupted Ellinor. 'I cannot undertake a solo. I would rather not do anything; but as that seems ungracious, I don't object to join in the choruses—nothing else.'

'Not even "Janet's Choice?"' said Antony, appealingly.

'Not even "Janet's Choice."'

'And you sing it so capitally!

And Augusta's upper D is of no use there, because she has no lower notes. It wants a contralto or a mezzo at least. Well, it can't be helped. I shall have to write for my cornet.'

'Don't throw stones, Antony, and do be still if you can. We have done enough mountain-climbing to-day: let us rest. How beautiful it is!'

Miss Rivers was right as to the beauty of the scene she looked upon, but there is no necessity to enter into any description of it; moreover, such description might betray the locality, and thus become, by a figure of speech, personal. It would have taken some days of hard walking to 'do' the mountains thoroughly, but they had done something, and were not ambitious. It was the fashion here to climb, in a greater or less degree; so they climbed. It was also the fashion to use poles or alpenstocks; so, of course, they had alpenstocks, which so added to their personal appearance as tourists that Mr. Antony had begged very hard to patronize the owner of a photographic studio in a sheltered spot on the hill, and a study of three tourists had in consequence been that morning immersed in the photographic bath for development.

There was also an archery-ground on the hill, bristling perpetually with the arrows of ambitious but inexpert archers, and a shooting-gallery for gentlemen, and a cricket-ground, which, being smooth and level, did very well for croquet, and on which the two ladies and their escort had been practising that game for a brief period. It was voted 'slow.' There were not enough of players; and so now they were sitting on a cliff, and Mr. Antony was amusing himself by throwing down the stones and loose gravel which came within reach of his hand.

'Don't throw stones,' repeated Miss Rivers. 'Suppose any one were coming up; and you know it is forbidden too.'

'By order of the committee,' drawled Antony—'a set of sapient old women, no doubt; besides, I

should like to see any one coming up the bare rock underneath us.'

'It isn't bare: there's brake to cling to. Don't, Antony.'

'Some one is coming up,' said Ellinor, suddenly.

Antony peeped over the cliff, and drew back, with a pantomimic representation of being handcuffed.

'It's a bobby in disguise.'

The words were hardly spoken when the bobby in disguise leaped upon the cliff, and passed them; as he did so, taking a handkerchief from his cheek, down which a little spot of blood was trickling.

'It's the travelling photographer!' exclaimed Antony, aghast. 'I'm afraid I must have hit him; and he's out of sight now, so I can't apologize. How the fellow does haunt us! He's stopping at the "Queen's," do you know. Not so bad for a vagabond artist, is it?'

'What nonsense, Antony! as if you could possibly tell what he is.'

'Oh, he may be a great swell for anything I know,' said Mr. Rivers, carelessly. 'I wish I hadn't hit him. One wouldn't throw stones at an artist, knowingly.'

At this juncture Antony caught his cousin's eye, and felt uncomfortable. There was something sarcastic about the expression, he thought—something of amusement, and something of contempt. It was very hard upon him. He began to wonder what he had said or done now, that she was turning into ridicule. He put on an injured tone, and asked the question. Her answer only puzzled him still more as to the real subject of her amusement.

'What have you done?' repeated Ellinor. 'I was thinking about the travelling photographer, Antony. So he is stopping at the "Queen's"? What a reckless spendthrift he must be! But I think you often find it so amongst vagabond artists.'

'It's time to go home,' said Antony, not quite sure of his ground. 'Shall we go? I want to see about that piano.'

Mr. Trafford Carr had passed on, still with his handkerchief to his face. He did not bear malice about the little cut from Antony's luckless

stone: it had come from Ellinor's party, and she knew of it. It would hurt her more than it did himself. He was not precisely exulting in this thought, but under such circumstances as his it was only natural to like to obtain sympathy whenever and however he could get it from Ellinor. And the sharp little stone had stirred him up, and done him good; besides which, at the cost of the cut he had heard all about the practising, the choruses, 'Janet's Choice,' and Antony's missing cornet.

When Mr. Carr got as far as the cornet he made a sudden stop in his walk, and said, half aloud, 'I have it.' Yes, there could be no doubt about it. He had seen on the parade below a placard concerning an amateur concert for the benefit of a national school, or an infant school, or some school; he was not very clear what. And, of course, Ellinor was going to sing at this concert, with her cousins. For Mr. Carr had remembered all about these cousins by this time. Also, knowing that the rector's name was Rivers, he came very rapidly to the conclusion that there must be a relationship there also, by means of which Ellinor had been drawn into the concert affair. Mr. Carr was guilty of an exclamation not expressing pleasure. He vituperated amateurs, Mr. Antony Rivers in particular; not that he was jealous of Antony, or indeed of any one now; he had, he flattered himself, received a lesson sufficient to cure him of jealousy. But there would be so much practising together for the cousins; and Ellinor would play his accompaniments. He would be occupying the position which Mr. Carr himself ought to have held. Then, too, as he spoke of his cornet, no doubt he was a tenor, and tenors are so —

As a proof that he was no longer accessible to jealousy, or any such sudden passion as had been wont to master him, Mr. Carr thrust his hand into his pocket, took thence a letter, written with elaborate care that very morning; rent it into a hundred pieces, and then sat down on the hill side to tear them still smaller and grind them into the turf

with his heel. Perhaps he repented after it was done; perhaps he felt foolishly guilty: at any rate he started off down the hill to look at that placard again, and to secure for himself the very best seat that money could secure for the concert.

He would wait until that took place to form his decision. He should see her there, and according to his impression then, he would either fill up that empty envelope once more or else give her up and go away like a reasonable man.

CHAPTER V.

MR. CARR'S 'IMPRESSION.'

So he had settled it. And so when he took his seat in the concert-room, one of the first to arrive, there was about him an atmosphere of strung-up determination which did not harmonize amiss with his well-cut features and resolute forehead. In all the rustle of the assembling audience, the moving of seats, and mistakes respecting places, Mr. Carr remained motionless, with his head steadily turned towards the orchestra. Again, he meant that Ellinor should see him, and all his calculations hinged upon how she would look when she did see him. He did not reflect that he was in some sort acting the part of a persecutor; he remembered only that some time since he had been guilty of a piece of folly, to undo which no perseverance on his part could be too great. He reflected only that his happiness, and, as he persuaded himself by way of self-justification, Ellinor's also, depended upon the undoing of it.

He listened to the overture with desperate patience. *She* was not one of the performers therein, and he had not expected that she would be. Then there came a solo, also unimportant; afterwards the first chorus in the programme; and then amongst the light dresses that began to flutter into their places he saw one of white, with a dark-red rose looping it up.

Mr. Carr leaned forward a little. *She must see him.* He must know whether the sight of him, suddenly, would yet affect her in any degree;

if not, his case was hopeless. She was so far above him up there. It was so intolerable to look at her in her calm consciousness of the barrier that separated performers from listeners. This was not his Ellinor, but a new character, which stung him with a sense of overwhelming distance. Why, he was no nearer and no more to her than any one of the hundred and fifty people who sat so complacently looking at her. The thing was monstrous!

Something almost savage in the excited earnestness of his face must have struck Ellinor when she did see him; or else she was nervous, or not well, or the heat was too much for her; all which latter excuses were readily found for her by her coadjutors, one of whom turned round just in time to see her drop the music from her hands, and to be aware that instead of singing in public, Ellinor was about to faint.

There was a little commotion up there—not much; the sympathy of the audience was of course excited, and one gentleman only was so ill-mannered as to rise from his seat and leave the concert-room.

It was Mr. Trafford Carr; and he cared nothing at all for the disapproving glances that followed him to the door.

He had come out with some mad thought of rushing off to the green room, and claiming the right to help her. But he dared not do it, alone as he was. His face reddened at the thought of the probable rebuff which would reward him. Instead, he went to walk about in his thin boots on the beach, reviling himself in a torrent of self-reproach; repressing, at first, like a guilty man, the gleam of exultation which came with the thought that he had still power to move her—that she could not possibly be indifferent to him.

Then he saw people turn round after they had passed, to stare at him; and he took off his white gloves with a sensation of annoyance that he could not have the shore to himself. It was late enough—nearly nine: why didn't these people go home, and keep respectable, healthy hours; and what did it matter to any one if he chose

to walk in white gloves and thin boots? Something more important than such considerations occupied him. He had before his eyes perpetually, 'a white dress with a red rose in it, and a face which had grown as white as the dress at the sight of him. How could he do it? And what was to be done now? One thing was certain; he could not sleep another night, nor rest satisfied another hour without begging forgiveness for what he had done.

Mr. Carr looked back towards the concert-room, and reflected that the performance was not to be over until ten. There was plenty of time before him; so he went to his room at the 'Queen's,' and wrote a letter, the compilation of which took him pretty nearly three-quarters of an hour; and having despatched it, he returned to the parade, by this time nearly deserted. Mr. Carr didn't mind that; indeed it was so much the better, since it left him a clear view of all carriages passing from the concert-room down the parade.

And when the town clock had struck ten some few minutes there was a light in the drawing-room at Heidelberg House, and Mrs. Rivers was overwhelming her niece with inquiries and attentions.

'What's this?' exclaimed Mr. Antony. 'Miss Challis—why, it's for you, Ellinor.'

Ellinor took the note, and turned slightly away from her cousin as she read the address. There was no symptom of fainting this time; but if Mr. Carr had flattered himself that he could disguise his handwriting from her he was mistaken.

'Have you an envelope down here, Augusta?' said Ellinor. 'Give it me, please.'

Then she took up a pencil and wrote a few words on the unopened cover of Mr. Carr's note, put it in the envelope, fastened and addressed it.

'Ring the bell, please, Antony.'

Mr. Antony obeyed, thinking he had never seen his cousin look so downright handsome as she did to-night in the self-contained calmness with which she did all this.

'Let that be sent at once to the

address upon it,' said Ellinor, giving her note to the servant. Then, turning to leave the room, she added, to Mrs. Rivers: 'It is from some one I used to know, but whom I do not wish to know any longer.'

A very simple and easy way of settling the matter; but who was to know how often that very night she wished with all her heart she had not done it; wished for the letter back again; wanted to look at the handwriting again; to recal the rash words she had traced upon the envelope; to say something less bitter? And yet if the option had been before her the probability is that she would have done the very same thing again.

While she did it, Mr. Carr was wandering up and down outside, watching the shadows on the blinds; and it was not until these were gone and the room was dark, that he went back again to the Queen's and found upon his table the letter, which he opened eagerly. It contained, as we know, his own note, the seal never having been broken, but on the outside there were a few words in pencil.

'Your own will separated us, and you know it. You told me with scant courtesy that you had been deceived in me, and that all communication between us had better cease. After that, the sort of persecution you are carrying on is unmanly and insolent. I shall not read your letter.—E. C.'

And Mr. Carr kissed the rod that smote him; that is to say, he put those scrawled pencil marks to his lips for the sake of the hand that wrote them.

CHAPTER VI.

A LUCKY SCAR.

He had nothing to do now but to pack up his belongings and go away. He was not in a very happy frame of mind. He shovelled his garments into the portmanteau, strapped, and locked it; but there was no hurry about the actual starting. It did not matter much what train he went by; it did not matter very much, he thought, what became

of him. For all that he ordered his portmanteau to be sent to the station in time for a certain train which he would meet; and then he caught up a waterproof cloak, reviling it for not having got itself put into the box with the other things; threw it over his arm and went out.

It was not a fashionable time of day for going out on the parade or on the beach; it was an hour when nursery-maids and children congregated thereon; the former to group together and embroider, and gossip under big umbrellas; the latter to carry on the great work of sand fortification, and to cry.

Mr. Carr's heart was bitter within him, and he felt towards these harmless little people an animosity quite unusual in him. A sudden hot gleam of sun striking upon his head, from beneath a 'cloud' might have aggravated his bitterness, but there lay before him a glorious bay sleeping calmly under a stormy sky, which should have changed his mood and made him human; but whether he was then insensible to the influence of beauty or not, it is certain that he laughed a sardonic, noiseless laugh, when the big umbrella of a nursemaid escaped her and went skimming off to sea with all the graceful airiness of a conscious truant.

Mr. Carr walked down in the direction of the pier, and a boatman whom he knew touched a dissipated hat to him, and said something about the water. Mr. Carr bit at once. It was the very thing for him in his present state of mind; the harder the work the better. There was time for just an hour's pull out on the bay.

'All right, Merry!' he said, jumping in. Now Mr. Carr went at once to the stern of the boat, and leaning over, began to dabble in the water, with the thoughts that he could not get rid of revolving in his mind, and deadening all impression of the present; so that he did not observe a party of two ladies and a gentleman who were evidently making for the boat, with the shawls and cloaks supposed to be requisite on the water; nor could he divine by instinct that the boatman had not

given him any invitation to go on the water, but had indistinctly informed him that he himself was going out.

Neither did the party of three observe that the figure leaning over the boat-side was not an assistant sailor, until they had entered the boat, when Mr. Antony Rivers remarked in a low tone, 'I say, I told you we wanted to be private.'

The sailor scratched his head and didn't hear. It wasn't very likely he was going to reject Mr. Carr's additional fee, knowing, as he did, pretty well the state of that gentleman's purse.

'I thought it was one of your party, sir,' he stammered at last. 'Know the gentleman very well indeed.'

Mr. Antony, considering in his own mind as to the politest terms in which he could clothe his intimation to the gentleman that he was not wanted, took his oar just as Mr. Carr reared himself up and held out his hand for it, crying, 'Now then, slow coach!'

The two young men stared at each other in ludicrous amazement and uncertainty, for a moment. Then Trafford spoke.

'I'm sure I beg your pardon, heartily. I thought—that is—I fancied I was to take an oar, and I was speaking to Merry there, not to you.'

Antony stared a little longer and was convinced that the mistake had been real. And as Mr. Carr spoke, the mark of a slight cut on his cheek smote upon Mr. Antony's conscience, and drove away the polite dismissal he had been about to utter.

'I owe him something for that,' he thought. 'No, I won't turn him out; he shall come if he likes.'

And then in answer to Mr. Carr's speech he nodded good-humouredly.

'You can have your turn by-and-by, sir, if you like,' he said. 'I dare say I shall be glad of a rest, for I am not in good practice.'

It was not to be wondered at, perhaps, that Mr. Carr took his seat in a somewhat bewildered state of mind; nor that the time passed by rapidly, and he forgot all about the single hour which was all he had to spare. It was but a short time

since he struck his colours, as it were, and gave up his cause as lost. He never even looked at the windows of Heildelburg House, as he passed it on his way to the shore. And now by a wonderful fatality, as he called it, here was Ellinor actually sitting near to him, within at least an hour's reach of land, and still skimming away vigorously seaward. It was true that she never looked at him or showed any consciousness of his presence; but she was there, and she *was* conscious of it. She sat with one glove off, from time to time dipping her hand into the water as the boat cut through it. Mr. Carr saw, without seeming to look, that the hand was very thin, and there were no rings on it. He remembered that Ellinor had been fond of rings, and wondered. And then he thought that her hand had shrunk away from them, and a strange sensation rose in his throat as the question presented itself, Had he anything to do with this?

He called himself a conceited egotist for the thought; nevertheless, his resolution so lately formed began to waver. He saw now many allowances to be made for Ellinor. That she had returned his letter under an angry impulse was clear. He had done that which it is hard for a woman to forgive, namely, taken her by surprise and caused her to make a scene in public; and she was naturally angry. He had no plan in his head now, no idea what he was going to do; but he wished with all his heart that his companions might also forget the lapse of time as he had done, and go on, for ever he would have said perhaps, but that would have been an exaggeration.

All at once a brisk wind caught the cloak on his arm and flapped it, and as he looked up at the clouds, a spot of rain fell upon his face.

'A bit of a scud, perhaps?' said the sailor, in answer to Mr. Antony's inquiry. 'Nothing to hurt.'

But then he nodded towards a dark line of water, and said something about its being rough for the ladies, so the boat's head was turned to land, and Mr. Carr took his stipulated turn at the oar.

'You'll find it hard work,' said Mr. Antony. 'Harder to get back than it was to come out, for the wind's rising, and it's dead against us.'

He was right. Mr. Carr did find it hard work, and the boatman smiled a calm superior smile, as the work which scarcely heated him, began to tell upon the unpractised arms of the amateur. Mr. Carr changed again after an hour's work. By this time it had become, as the boatman predicted, rough for the ladies; the waves were high, and began to curl over white and angry at the edges; and they were still some distance from the shore.

Mr. Carr's spirits seemed to have risen with the rising turmoil of wind and wave. He did not at once resume his former seat. It is probable that he was calculating what would be the consequence if he dared to change it, as he stood steadying himself, and unconsciously winding again the paletot about his arm. The decision was made for him. Either catching his heel against something, or in a sudden pitch of the boat, he lost his balance, and fell heavily against the side. When he recovered himself, there was a gleam of satisfaction in his face, which Mr. Antony, if he had seen it, would have thought very wonderful as the result of a species of crab-catching.

In fact, Mr. Carr as he fell, had been conscious that the gloveless hand over the side caught hurriedly at the cloak round his arm as though to save him. He was no longer in a mood to weigh chances and consequences. He ran up his colours again boldly, and sat down beside Ellinor and opposite her cousin. Miss Rivers might see, perhaps, but she could not hear, and Trafford did not care: he was determined not to lose this last chance. The words which came most readily to his lips were, 'So you would save me yet, if I were drowning?' but prudent for once, he suppressed them. They might have displeased her. He bent forward to hide her as much as possible from the other occupants of the boat; but Mr. Antony was just then all attention to his stroke,

and Augusta was watching the distance diminish between the boat and the shore.

'Ellinor,' said Mr. Carr; 'have a little mercy, and tell me you sent that note back on the impulse of the moment. Won't you ever forgive me?'

It was the very best tone and sentence he could have used. Ellinor knew he must be very gravely in earnest before he would so speak.

'For anything you may have made me suffer,' she replied, 'I forgave you long ago.'

Mr. Carr did not quite like the answer. He waited a little to reflect upon the best thing to say next. And then he dashed reflection on one side as useless. If there was nothing else to help him, that wouldn't.

'It is my last chance,' he said, with reckless vehemence, 'and I can't stop to weigh words. You are very hard to me, Ellinor; you make forgiveness itself unmerciful. What use is it to say in that calm unconcern of yours, that you forgive me? I say, I want you to love me. Why, I would give my life for yours this moment. I am not jealous now; it is beaten out of me, and serve me right. But I want *you*, Ellinor, not your ghost who says so indifferently. "I have forgiven you, long ago." I want *you*, as you used to be. Can't you give me another chance?'

Ellinor put up her hand to stop him, for Augusta was looking at them with an expression of stupefied amazement. 'Don't talk to me any more now, Trafford.'

The next thing Mr. Antony Rivers saw, as he looked up, was the vagabond artist putting his waterproof cloak round Ellinor to keep off the spray.

CHAPTER VII.

A GOLDEN TIP.

'I say,' remarked Mr. Antony, standing in the hall with his hat on, 'Augusta, did you see what he gave old Merry?'

'No.'

'It was gold. I saw it glitter. I believe it was a sovereign.'

Miss Rivers laughed.

'You would have done the same, perhaps, under the circumstances.'

'Well, if I had been very flush. But,' said Antony, ruefully, 'the circumstances! Ah! you see he has cut me out.'

'Don't pretend, Tony.'

'But, Augusta, I really was getting fond of her. And then—the vagabond artist; think of it. What is to become of me? And the air with which she said to us, "This is Mr. Trafford Carr, the gentleman I spoke of last night." It was malicious in the extreme. She was thinking all the while what a state I should be in.'

'Don't flatter yourself.'

'And—I say, I cut his cheek.'

Again Miss Rivers laughed.

'He won't mind that. Didn't you tell me the sight of the little scar prevented your telling him the boat was engaged?'

'The very thing!' cried Antony. 'Can't you hint it to him?'

'Let us go up,' said Augusta. 'I am going to find mamma, and take her in to invite him for the evening.'

'In his damp coat,' muttered Antony. 'If I thought he wouldn't bear malice.'

Mr. Carr, however, cared nothing about his damp coat, and it was true that in his exultation he had given old Merry a golden fee, as in some sort an agent of the happiness which had come to him. He had been allowed to assist Ellinor from the boat, to the consternation of the cousins; and he could hardly restrain a shout of triumph, as he stood on the shore, with her hand on his arm. As to the once reviled paletot, it was

a wonderful agent; if Ellinor had not caught at it he might never have found courage to speak; and, besides, it had sheltered her.

Just now Ellinor's one hand was again on the sleeve of that same damp coat, and she was saying, with some hesitation, 'Trafford, we must make no mistake this time. Even now it would be better to separate if——'

Mr. Carr did not object to the hand on his sleeve; but he did object to the speech, and stopped it. He had a great deal to say on his own part; so much, that it was not all said when Mrs. Rivers came in, and asked him to have some tea; and he remembered all at once that his evening coat was in his portmanteau at the station.

'Never mind your coat,' blurted out Antony; 'that is, if it isn't wet. And look here, Mr. Carr; you're never going away to-morrow. Why, there's a grand bazaar going to happen, and the band of I don't know what regiment is to come. We'll send for your luggage. And then there's a glee party at the rectory. By the way, what are you?'

'Bass,' responded Trafford, laughing.

'Capital. Just what we want. Then you'll stay?'

'Well,' said Mr. Carr, with a side glance towards Ellinor, 'since my business has waited so long, it may wait a little longer. I am very much obliged to you all.'

'And I say, Mr. Carr,' said Antony, following him out into the hall at about ten o'clock, 'you don't bear malice about the little stone. It was lucky after all, wasn't it?'

HER FIRST SEASON.

AH, Lady Geraldine! soon the beginning
Of London Society you'll enter upon,
The lottery where all your compeers are winning,
Or trying to win, as mammas push them on,
A prize matrimonial, whose value is golden,
Whose acres are broad and from mortgages free;
For nowadays Hymen has lost all the olden
Simplicity, and loves the sign £. s. d.!

You'll have a long round of amusement before you,
 For we're coming, and swiftly, to April and May;
Soirées dansantes, grand dinners, and fêtes will not bore you
 As yet, for your life is a cloudless spring day.
 You think you love dearly the rose-trees and fountains
 Of the quaint old wide garden that shuts in your home,
 And the sight of the dun distant purple-clad mountains,
 So that to our Babylon you'd never roam.

You're young, Lady Geraldine; and when the vision
 Of your first London Season comes over my mind,
 I cannot but smile *tant peu soit* in derision,
 As I think of the change that a twelvemonth will find.
 Why think of your triumphs—your leading the fashion
 In laces and diamonds and rarest pink pearls,
 When, instead of these roses—don't fly in a passion—
 The bright gems are twined in those exquisite curls.

Nous aurions changé I think in September,
 When you leave town for rest in the dull rural scene,
 I wonder—I wonder—if you will remember
 The wild surging love whose day-star you have been.
 I mix jest and earnest, as those must who knowing
 What life is, know also how often sweet truth
 In a few months will vanish—ay, only bestowing
 A faded dream for the dear hopes of our youth.

You think I am bitter. I've known hearts broken,
 Lady Geraldine, where every promise was fair;
 Where there lacked not the greatest or smallest true token
 Of affection—and yet it has come to despair.
 Despair, Lady Geraldine, to the man bringing
 The hopes and the strength of his manhood to meet;
 The woman's cruel hauteur, which carelessly flinging
 His idolatry off, spurned him when at her feet.

A thousand apologies. Really I'm blushing
 To have been so ill-bred as to rudely speak thus:
 No doubt London Society is priceless for crushing
 Foolish feelings—sometimes strongly looked at by *us*.
 You all are trained better. A fortunate marriage
 Has many a *sine quâ non*—large estates—
 Broad acres—an opera-box—horses and carriage—
 Free access to balls, levées, dinners, and fêtes.

And then you can lead a most brilliant existence,
 A whirl of excitement unchecked day by day;
 Such low things as constancy put in the distance,
 Some men are so *bête*, and talk in a dull way.
 What, Lady Geraldine! have I offended?

I but picture a future that's common, you know:
 Most *demoiselles* think such a prospect is splendid—
 Ah, my darling, I've done if the tears are to flow.

That 'one touch of nature' has made you yet dearer,
 Be assured, pet, I never was thinking of you;
 Let that knowledge make the sky now become clearer,
 'Twas a picture of others, my own, that I drew.
 I do believe *you*; and come fortune or sorrow,
 Be my fate doomed to sink into darkness or rise,
 Whate'er be the hue of the dawning to-morrow,
 I shall read steadfast love in those sweet violet eyes!

W. R.

AUTUMN GOSSIP.



F all the four seasons, autumn perhaps varies the most in different countries and latitudes. Spring everywhere presents nearly the same characteristics; whether it comes as a sudden burst or a gradual change, it is still the grand *crescendo* of the year, diversified by violent contrasts—by hot sunshine, and cold, piercing winds, by drought and dust followed by heavy showers. Summer, to continue our musical metaphor, is everywhere the *forte* portion of the twelvemonth—it may be *fortissimo* or *fff*, or it may manifest only a feeble strength, *mezzo-forte*, a period of tragical mirth, in which the sun puts on a sickly smile, only half visible through mists and drizzling rain. But in all cases the year does its best in summer to be genial,

merry, and energetic; and all countries have a summer, such as it is.

In countries where there is no winter, we cannot compare it with other winters; and in climates like that of the Mediterranean coasts, where autumn insensibly glides into spring, with no intervening frosts and scarcely a flake of snow, it may be fairly said there is no real winter. The varieties of winter are few. Where there is winter it is of two sorts only—a wet, mild winter, proverbially making a full churchyard; and a sharp, dry winter, with continued frost: that is all the wintry variety we have; for when once the thermometer is below freezing-point, what difference does it make to us in the outward appearance of nature—although it may make a difference to our gardens, and sometimes to our ears and noses—how many degrees lower it falls? Ice is still ice, and snow still snow (more sand-like, perhaps, and finer, the colder it is) both at *plus* 30° Fahr., and at *minus* 30°; that is, throughout the pretty little range of 60°, or more if you like.

Autumn may be either a prolonged *sostenuto*, continuing summer a month or two longer in nearly its original richness and beauty, or a sudden pause; a bar of silence interrupting a lovely strain, and changing its key, time, and measure; a dead stop put on the warmth that reaches us; a sharp pull up, if not of the sun's chariot, certainly of the sun's calorific rays. The first kind of autumn may be especially enjoyed and luxuriated in, in those earthly paradises, the Swiss-Italian lakes, and in certain portions of the coasts of France, Spain, and Italy—certain portions, we cautiously state, because in other certain portions autumnal enjoyment is spoiled by mosquitoes, bad smells, heavy night-fogs, and fever-breeding malaria. Bugs should also be honoured with a place on the list of drawbacks from a Mediterranean autumn; but when a house is not thoroughly infested, as in the walls and ceilings, they may be kept in check by iron bedsteads, and temporarily defied by dropping five drops of essential oil of lavender on your lower sheet, one in the middle, and one at each corner. But beds are not the only autumnal haunts of the *Cimex lectularius*. You may pick up its chance acquaintance in a Venetian gondola, as well as in a Neapolitan hackney-coach.

The abrupt, parish-constable-like form of autumn, which arrests summer, puts fine weather into the stocks, and claps an extinguisher on the

sun, may be suffered in the north of North America, and in Russia, where summer goes in a day, and winter comes. You may cross a river in a boat at night, and walk back on the ice in the morning. Thin linen habiliments may be worn on Monday, and on Tuesday the reign of furs may begin. To-day all sorts of carriages run on wheels; to-morrow, wheels are absurd and impossible—snow has fallen all the night, and vehicles must slide on sledges. In one week, Cronstadt is reached by steamers; in the course of the next, you cross the same water with three horses before you. Instead of the lingering, dallying pleasures of autumn, wherein you toy with the moderated sunshine, and taste and smell the last fruits and flowers, reluctant to give them up, you are treated to a pantomime-trick, a very ill-natured one, which snatches your nosegay out of your hand, and gives you a ducking in a frozen pond. It is worse than cold pig on a Sunday morning, when you are prolonging pleasant dreams a little too late.

What becomes of garden produce under such a crushing catastrophe? The last (probably China) rose of summer does not, as in more favoured climes, remain on the bough until it is the first rose of spring. All vegetables are cooked, done brown, not by fire and water, but by frost. 'No greens, sir, to-day,' says the straitened housekeeper. A few savoys and roots are stored in frost-proof cellars, but they have not the flavour of an early York cabbage. Hence the contrivances of sour kroust, salted cucumbers, dried peas, and artichoke bottoms—vegetables in name, flavourless shadows of a succulent substance, the body and the form without the essence and the spirit. Gastronomically, as well as atmospherically, an English winter is more luxurious than a Russian autumn.

Our own autumn lies between the two extremes of late superabundance and early scarcity—of sudden assault and slow approach. As autumn varies greatly all over the globe, so our own autumns vary one from the other. As the gifts of autumn are the results of summer, so, speaking

generally, British autumns would be even more liberal and lavish of gifts than they are if British summers were longer and hotter. Rarely do they raise us to the dignity of a wine-making people, as Dr. Johnson assumed, with poetical licence, when in search of consolation for the loss of fine weather:—

• What bliss to life can autumn yield,
If glooms, and showers, and storms prevail;
And Ceres flies the naked field,
And flowers, and fruits, and Phœbus fail?

Oh! what remains, what lingers yet,
To cheer me in the darkening hour?
The grape remains! the friend of wit,
In love and mirth of mighty power.

• Haste—press the clusters, fill the bowl;
Apollo, shoot thy parting ray:
This gives the sunshine of the soul, —
• • • • •

For the missing line we substitute—

• What will teetotal readers say?

Spenser is truer to our native nature—

Then came the autumn, all in yellow clad,
As though he joyed in his plenteous store,
Laden with fruits that made him laugh, full glad
That he had banish'd Hunger, which to-fore
Had by the belly oft him pinched sore.
Upon his head a wreath, that was enroll'd
With ears of corn of every sort, he bore: ,
And in his hand a sickle he did hold,
To reap the ripened fruits, the which the Earth
had yold.'

What our autumnal weather is to be, whether fair or foul, depends upon the same incalculable causes which prevent our predicting with certainty whether it will rain or not this day three weeks. As a rule, our autumns may be expected to be fine, upon the whole. An equinoctial gale is only a brief interruption of the general serenity; it is nothing more than the passing breeze to which the best-regulated domestic circle is liable. October is frequently a delicious month, exhilarating, fresh, and not too cold. On the Continent, the pleasures and plenty of the vintage mostly fall due in the beginning of that month. For Switzerland and the Alps, the 'Practical Guide' tells us, October is supereminently *the best month—experto crede*. A few wet days towards the end of September are usually suc-

ceeded by a lease of glorious weather, fresh, genial temperature, appetising, strengthening air for walking in, days long enough for rational distances, autumnal tints superb, sunrises and sunsets incomparable, fewer tourists, ampler accommodation and attention, and lower prices. An infatuation possesses the world, which causes it to run home with the last clouds of September. In the country, November vouchsafes us many pleasant days, although fog and smoke give it a bad name in London; but local conditions of the atmosphere ought not to be laid to the fault of the season. December, too, gives many cheerful, outdoor hours between eight in the morning and four in the afternoon.

A French savant, M. Matthieu (de la Drôme), has been lately trying his hand at weather-prophecy, professing to take a longer range than is attempted by our own gallant admiral of the weather. He asserts that he can calculate the weather a long while beforehand, for Geneva. It follows that, if it be possible to do so for that republic (although so tiny that the whole of it was dusted when Voltaire shook his wig), it is likewise possible for any other region of the globe. His theory and his rules have received hard knocks from Le Verrier, the astronomer. Moreover, although, like Murphy, he has made some lucky hits, his prophecies have not all come true.

Still, multitudinous minor prognostics of the weather find ready and undoubting believers. A philosopher was strolling in the fields, studying an open book. 'That gentleman's book will be wet before he gets back,' said a shepherd, who saw him pass. 'Why do you think so?' 'I don't *think* so; I know it.'—'But why?' 'Why? The cows are sticking their noses in the hedge.' Old experience lays down sundry wise saws. When the stars look larger than ordinary, it is a sign of change of weather. Very bright or double rainbows indicate long-continued rain; the same when the rain smokes as it falls on the ground. Lightning in winter is a sign of coming snow, wind, or tempest. Bats flying about in unusual num-

bers announce that the next day will be warm and fine. Flies bite sharper and tease you more before a tempest. When the gnats dance in the setting sunshine, some hold it a sign of fine weather *to-morrow*, while sceptics declare that it is only a sign of fine weather *to-day*. If it rains on the 3rd of May there will be no walnuts; if on the 15th of June, no grapes. Plenty of snow precedes an abundant year; plenty of rain, the contrary. A rainy autumn spoils the wine of that year, and threatens a poor crop of wheat next year. A fine autumn is mostly followed by a windy winter; a wet spring and summer by a fine autumn. On the other hand, when the autumn is fine, the following spring is apt to be rainy.

The English autumn, paradoxically but practically, often includes a couple of summers—St. Michael's and St. Martin's summers; the latter, especially, all the more delightful, as being the farewell embrace of a cherished friend who is about to depart for a six-months' absence.

'Like sunset gleams, that linger late :
While all is dark'ning fast,
Are hours like these we snatch from fate,
'The brightest—and the last.'

Whose memory does not associate the annual roast goose, first instituted by Elizabeth at Tilbury Fort, on Michaelmas Day, with columns of gnats dancing in the sunny air, and calm, cloudless weather, suited for apple gathering? Who can taste a fresh-caught Yarmouth herring, 'y' which doth come from y' deepe waters nigh unto y' shore, when Michaelmas-tide approacheth,' without beholding, even were he confined to his chamber, the sea spread out like an azure mirror, with its horizon extended, by mirage, for leagues; the children playing on the warm, sandy shore, and the groups of brown-faced, lounging beachmen, who have nothing better to do in such splendid weather than to take pleasure-parties to the Scroby Sands, but some of whom have saved as many lives as they have fingers and toes on their hands and feet? Who has not basked in the spell of sunshine which bursts out on about the

11th of November, the feast of the benevolent St. Martin, who shared his cloak with an ill-clad soldier, and who rewarded good children by miraculously changing his donkey's droppings into real gingerbread-nuts.* The robin singing his autumnal song—more plaintive and sweeter than his summer lay; the dusty lane sprinkled with fallen leaves; the bright-red berries of the hawthorn and the holly; the blue sky reflected by the bluer brook; the threads of gossamer floating in the air, or streaming across the grass from blade to blade; the blushing orchard; the bending branches laden with green bullaces or purple damsons; the gardener and the farmer hastening to plant and care for their spring and their winter crops, by making the most of a shortened day, are prominent details of the picture representing St. Martin's summer in the country.

Man has also his St. Martin's summer, both morally and physically. There is a green middle age, a sunshiny decline, a youthful way of growing old, which is greatly to be envied. Nor is it the indolent and do-nothing who succeed in retaining the freshness and vigour of youth, after acquiring the knowledge and experience of manhood. Both the mind and the body fade, in idleness, like flowers unrefreshed by air and rain; they rust and lose their elasticity, for want of proper exercise. The busiest men—provided they are not *too* busy and broken down with toil—ever remain the youngest men. If unattacked by disease or accident they may live on, unconscious of their accumulated birthdays, and may fancy they are still in summer, long after they have passed their autumnal equinox. We may live and learn, and ride hobbyhorses, too, even unto the close of our days. Happy, thrice happy, are those who can do so. May we all, then, remain young, at least in spirit, to the last; and, above all, may we never grow grumpy!

Astronomically, autumn commences this year, for us, at sixteen minutes past one in the afternoon

* Legendary.

of Wednesday, September 23rd. Practically, it begins with the first grand drop in temperature which is sure to occur some time in October. The fall of the leaf, so popular and proverbial an emblem, is no real or infallible sign of autumn. The leaves of some deciduous trees—of the lime and the horse-chesnut for instance—fall before it comes; those of others, as of the oak and beech, especially when young, remain hanging on after autumn is past; whilst on not a few evergreens the leaves hold tight to their branch throughout a whole twelve-month, and longer. Autumn, likewise, begins on the day when the sun's meridian distance from the zenith, after growing gradually greater and greater, is at the exact mean between his least and his greatest distances from that point. During autumn, the days are always on the decrease, and always shorter than the nights, *except* the first day, which is the day of the autumnal equinox, the day and the night being then equal. The autumnal signs of the zodiac are the Scales, the Scorpion, and the Archer. The word autumn does not spring from any root in either the Greek or the German languages. Etymologists fetch the word so far as to derive it from the Latin *augere*, to increase, to enrich, because the earth then enriches us with her fruits. Autumnus is short for auctumnus; *auctus* is the passive participle of *augere*; and the derivation, consequently, as clear as daylight. As the Anglo-Saxons reckoned by winters, so divers nations have counted the years by autumns. Tacitus states that the ancient Germans were acquainted with all the seasons of the year except autumn, of which they had not the slightest idea—which simply means that they knew nothing of the delights of a Roman autumn.

Cruel deeds are perpetrated in France (also in Spain and Portugal) sometime in autumn. A popular conspiracy is annually got up, to misuse a certain individual, one Jean Raisin. All summer long, he is well fed and tenderly cared for, to blind him to his coming fate.

At a secret council, the day is fixed when his public torments are to begin. His blushing honours, his glowing decorations, are then torn from him, or slashed away with knives, if the hard hands of rustics do not suffice. He is carried away to a gloomy prison, kept sweltering several days in a narrow dungeon, with more companions in misery than there is room for without crowding. No one pities his bruises and beatings; no one thinks of helping him out of his misery; on the contrary, it is a subject of merriment. And then they put him, not on, but under the rack. Sometimes he is crushed beneath a wooden press; frequently, he is trampled and squeezed to a pulp by the naked feet of half-tipsy men. In spite of all their care to prevent it, the floors and the walls are scattered with his gore. The atmosphere reeks with the steam and the smell of it. The actors of the drama become excited, until it has almost the air of an orgie. Finally, with Gallic levity, having cruelly martyred Jean Raisin, they convert him into an idol, a sort of demigod, singing songs in his honour, and dancing dances under his inspiration.

Something of the kind occurs with us. The mighty of the land take it into their heads to aver that poor John Barleycorn shall die. They then take a plough and plough him down; put clods upon his head; and then they swear a solemn oath John Barleycorn is dead. But cheerful spring comes kindly on, and showers begin to fall; John Barleycorn gets up again, and sore surprises all. When sober autumn enters mild, he grows both wan and pale; his bending joints and drooping head show he begins to fail. John Barleycorn was sure a wight of noble enterprise; for if you do but taste his blood, 't will make your courage rise.'

'Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand,
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fall throughout the land!'

Burns will not be speedily forgotten; but how few remember

that John Philips wrote, in Miltonian verse, a poem in two books for the glorification of the juice of the apple?

We all know by heart 'The Seasons' of Thomson, who, like many other poets and prophets, is held in higher esteem abroad than at home, in spite of his pleasing train of thought and mellifluous facility of unrhymed verse. A rival seasonal bard once flourished in the person of Charles François de Saint-Lambert, born at Nancy, in 1717. At the court of Stanislaus, King of Poland, he met Voltaire, who infected him with the passion of versification. In his early youth, he conceived the plan of a didactic poem; and in 1769, 'Les Saisons' appeared, after being heralded by 'Morning' and 'Evening.' He had the good luck to escape the revolutionary scythe, and died in February, 1803. Saint-Lambert is far from equalling Thomson. As a specimen, take this, translated from 'L'Automne,' giving the original the benefit of any doubt.

'Let sloth give way to manly exercise;
Let labour mingle with our daily joys;
Fatigue will cure the weariness of rest.
Now, on the denizens of earth, and air,
And water, wage we war; Autumn commands,
With mimic thunder arm'd, at break of day,
A modern Salmonéus, I await
The hare, the graceful roebuck; or I track
The straggling partridge o'er the stubbly field.'

Several sayings, apochryphal it may be, relating to autumn, are attributed to the sages of antiquity. Diogenes, the cynic, referring to autumnal hydrophobia, declared that if you want to drown your dog, you have only to give out that he is mad.

Democritus found the laughing hyena the most sympathetic creature at this time of year, while Heraclitus was deeply touched with the pensive attitude of the weeping willow. The Academicians held that birch is now at its highest perfection. 'Only try it,' they said, 'and you will see that it renders Plato intelligible, and Aristotle easy.' Socrates compared his wife, Xanthippe, to an autumnal squall in the Ægean Sea, as being short and sharp, little and loud, a good blow-

up, very polyphloisboio. Aspasia invented the word 'autumnality,' to express gently and genteelly the condition of persons of a certain age. Hippocrates advised young ladies, in autumn, not to indulge in too many raw apples, unless reduced to pulp with an apple-scoop. Celsus considered, from the 1st of November, one glass of whiskey-toddy an excellent nightcap; two, as apt to make you oversleep yourself; three, as tending to morning headache; four, productive of red and watery eyes; five, the parents of pimples and polypus; six, a step towards delirium tremens.

Tertullian calls autumn *tentator vultudinum*; trying to the health. Horace speaks of *Autumnus Libitine questus acerba*; autumn profitable to the cruel goddess of funerals. Medical men greatly shorten the signification of the season, restricting it to the brief interval between hot weather and the first approach of cold. The coolness of the nights, the dampness of the evenings, the frequent alternation of rain and mist, with heat and tempest, the variety and abundance of fruit, render autumn apt to be unhealthy. But it costs no more to take care of yourself now than at any other time of the year. Put on your flannels instantly, if you have imprudently doffed them in summer. Keep good fires; which does not mean big ones, but plenty of them, and steadily kept up. Amongst other things to be done in autumn, may be mentioned, brew your beer; one condition of producing which good is, not to be afraid of using malt and hops. Bottle your wine, plant your cabbages, and, above all, pay your quarter's bills.

Finally, one autumnal duty of man is not only to get fat himself, but to enable others to get fat also;—to live, and let live, in short. All nature sets him the example. At

this season, flesh is fat, and fowl are fat; the very fish in the sea, the silver-scaled herring and the shining sprat, are fat. All game—except those which, like the hare, are condemned to perennial leanness—are fat. The ortolan can hardly fly, from obesity; the quail bursts its skin as it falls, shot, to the ground; the kitchenmaid wails because the pheasant won't bear plucking. The bear and other hybernating animals lay in, and on them, the store of fat which is to serve them for coals and candles throughout the winter. The very vegetables manifest a tendency to fat; the potato prepares her fattening starch; the carrot and the parsnip mature their fattening sugar; the walnut and the filbert develop their oil. Plants which look lank and lean above ground, are in all the better plight at root. The beehive is well-filled and heavy; the dairy is garnished with oleaginous extracts; the kitchen is hung with bacon and ham. The human frame likewise should assume a respectable pinguetude, under pain of being condemned to cod-liver oil.

To get fat in autumn, now, is merely a prudent precaution. Certainly, it is the best hare-skin, chest-plaister, comforter, and respirator, which we can put on. Nevertheless, in these days, we can have fat fresh meat, all winter through, with its appropriate garnish of vegetables. In the good old times, before turnips were invented, as soon as winter set in, you could find no unsalted flesh except what you carried on your own bones. Corned beef and pickled pork are excellent; but it is hard to have to eat them, and nothing else, for months and months consecutively. Happily, the progress of agriculture has erased 'Slaughter-month' from our calendar, as a synonym of November.



PASSAGES FROM THE FAMILY HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH ARISTOCRACY.

I.—THE CAVENDISHES.

IT was in the summer of 1586 that three gallant vessels left the harbour of Plymouth. A July day had been selected for the commencement of as adventurous a voyage as ever marked the most enterprising period of English history—the reign of Elizabeth. First, the ‘Desire,’ a new ship of 120 tons, spread her sails; next came the ‘Content,’ a barque of 60 tons; lastly, the ‘Hugh Gallant,’ of 40 tons; and with this little fleet, containing about 123 persons—counting every one—high deeds were to be performed. The young admiral, delicate in form, *point de vice* in dress, looked far more fitted to dance a measure than to sail against the ‘Spaniard;’ for the ‘Spaniard’ was the arch-foe of that day in England. He had, indeed, been hitherto a complete carpet-knight; and following out the amusements and observances of court life, had impaired a fortune which he was now going, he believed, to retrieve: no way so certain as to attack—without costing the Queen anything—her Majesty’s enemies: no way so certain, he expected, in all the excitability of his sanguine nature, as to issue forth on the great main, and trust to fortune to let him have some Spanish galleon for his prize, full of Spanish gold. Such, in those days, was the mariner’s dream.

Yet that very fine gentleman in his laced suit, who stood on the deck of the ‘Desire,’ and listened with throbbing heart to the salute from the Plymouth batteries, had had no nautical education. Thomas Candish, Caundish, or Cavendish, was the son of a Suffolk squire, and had succeeded to his father’s fine property at Trimley, in that county, and had soon consumed it in ‘gallantry,’—which word I take to signify not anything desperately wild, but all sorts of show, extravagance, and hospitality. And now he undertook this voyage upon the strength of his general education, as

Raleigh had done, taking with him an able captain or two to do the practical work of the voyage.

Away he sails: the ships are provided with necessaries sufficient for two years, and all at his cost. And ‘Weel betide him.’

Who, as he tackles about in yon summer seas—who, may we not ask, are the Cavendishes? And how has this name, so beloved, so honoured in our land, come amongst us? Wherever sprang a lineage so ancient, and so prosperous, and so noble? Among the followers of William the Conqueror, Robert de Gernon was one of the fortunate knights who obtained the hand of an heiress in marriage. It was in the reign of Edward the Second he espoused (to speak in heraldic strain) the daughter of John Potton, Lord of Cavendish in Suffolk, and by her had four sons, who all took the name of Cavendish; and from him was descended William Cavendish, the famous navigator and the admiral of this adventurous fleet.

Already had the young spendthrift lived his life, for he had come into his estates—Trimley, St. Martin, Grimsten, Skatten, and other manors—when a minor; and now, having deeply encumbered all his property, he was glad to seek his fortunes far beyond seas.

Let us follow his course but for a while; for that which excited the wonderment of the world in those days is but an everyday story in ours; and the discoveries of Cavendish the navigator are out of print, as it were, in the nautical world.

He made for Sierra Leone. What an untracked mass of pestilence must that region then have been! Cavendish, however, did not tempt his destiny by staying long: only long enough to burn some houses, and to do much harm. The negroes fled to the woods, and, flying, discharged their famous poisoned arrows, and severely injured their

invaders. Away sailed our eager young admiral for the Straits of Magellan, which, though but ninety leagues in length, it took him nearly six weeks to pass. Thus beginning, Thomas Cavendish made the second voyage that had ever been made by an Englishman round the world. From February, 1587, to November in the same year, he ravaged the coasts of Chili, Peru, and New Spain. He who had been obliged by necessity to take to this adventurous life, attacked forts, slaughtered Spaniards by the score, reduced towns to ashes, and captured ships. Cavendish, in his pinnace, led the way to conquest, and many a triumphant engagement crowned his valour with success, and enriched his treasury. Two years, one month, and nineteen days were passed in this memorable voyage. At the expiration of that time the gay young admiral, sun-burnt, no doubt, and somewhat careworn, came back home. The Plymouth harbour again received his little squadron; and triumphant must have been that entrance, even though a storm, just as the fleet neared the shore, had carried off most of the sails. Fortune, meantime, had been benignantly raising other members of the Cavendish family in their ascent to fame and honours.

I wish no enemy a more complicated task than that of unravelling the relationships of the Cavendishes. Some ancient lady of that house, at her spinning-wheel, had them, no doubt, at her fingers' ends—how all sprang from that John, that Roger, that Stephen, and Richard, who gave up the name of de Gernon, and took that of Caundish, or Candish, or Cavendish; how John begat John, who was knighted for killing Wat Tyler (poor Wat Tyler!); and how, in good time, William, the faithful servant of Wolsey, inherited all the estates of the family. There are so many Williams, and so many Thomases, and so many Johns in this lineage, that we wish the heralds joy of them, and are not surprised to know that there is a certain work styled 'Who wrote Cavendish's Wolsey?' for by our troth it is not very easy to answer the question. But

whilst Thomas was sailing round the world, and slaughtering savages, and cajoling Indian caciques, a younger and more flourishing scion of his parent stock was preparing, by a liberal education, to be one of those 'Gentlemen of England, who live at home at ease.' He was still a young man, that William Cavendish, when the luckless Thomas resolved to make a second voyage (woe's me!) in order to follow up the great success of the first. Thomas was evidently one of those men who did not 'leave well alone,'—one of the greatest imaginable mistakes in life. Besides, a taste for gain, to say nothing of the spirit of adventure born with Englishmen, prompted him to his last fatal enterprise.

Whilst his cousin William was in training for the court, Thomas Cavendish, therefore, was sailing again out of Plymouth harbour, this time with three tall ships and three barques, and steering for the Canary Islands.

And now a series of misfortunes accompanied the admiral wheresoever he went, and left him not, until he died. First, under the equinoctial line, he was becalmed for seven-and-twenty days together: not a breath of wind to swell his sails. Then the men fell sick of the scurvy. Next, though they found some plunder at Placentia, in Brazil, the sailors began to quarrel. They made for St. Sebastian, and, with twenty-three men only, took the town whilst the people were at mass; but they stayed too long there, and the crews became disorganized. Onward they went towards Magellan, but storms, which damaged the ships, retarded them. They put into Port Desire, so named by Cavendish in his first voyage, to recruit, and then set sail again. And now comes the terrible part of this sad history. In March they doubled Cape Forward, and here were obliged, for the preservation of their lives, to land and remain, for their vessels were again damaged by storms. They lay at anchor in a small bay; famine and cold began to thin the crews, yet Cavendish resolved to thin them still more; and forty-four sick men were put

on shore, where they miserably perished from cold and hunger.

After this all went wrong. Better to have trusted all to Providence than to have committed an act like that; and never was it forgiven by the poor mariners who saw their comrades thus abandoned, to say nothing of the judgments of a Higher Power and the stings of conscience. About forty-seven or fifty men alone remained in the fleet; and now Cavendish became impatient to depart. He had contemplated a voyage to China: this he was now constrained to surrender—at least, the passage through the Straits of Magellan; and he therefore complied with the wishes of his men, and returned to Brazil. His men had suffered incredible hardships at St Sebastian, and were now far from being in a state for further adventures. Often did they fight for their victuals, as if, said one of the company, they had been no Christians, but Jews; whilst those who got the best used to retreat into some wilderness, sit down under a tree, and stay there till meat and drink were consumed.

And now, with the same run of ill-luck against him, Cavendish departed for the Straits of Magellan; but though, as the ill-fated admiral himself relates, the voyage, only six hundred leagues in length, was generally accomplished in twenty or thirty days, it took him four months to complete it. 'Such,' he says, 'was the adverseness of our fortunes, that in coming thither we spent the summer, and found in the Straits the beginning of a most extreme winter, not durable [endurable] for Christians.'

Nothing, indeed, could justify the conduct of Cavendish, except what he himself states, namely, that, 'even during the month of May, there was nothing but such flights of snow, and extremities of frost, as, in all the time of my life I never saw anything to compare to.' Alas! the sufferings of those whom he put on shore must soon have been terminated.

He pursued his voyage to Brazil; and now Destiny plainly showed her aim. First, the 'Desire' and the 'Black

Pinnacle' left him. The captain of the 'Desire,' John Davis, was, he declared, the author of all his calamities. Of the fatal voyage Cavendish thus writes:—

'And now, to come to that villaine that hath been the deathe of me, and the decay of the whole action; I meane Davis, whose only treacherie in running from me hath been the utter ruine of all. As I since understood, Davis his intention was ever to run away. This is God's will, that I should put him in trust that should be the end of my life, and the decay of the whole action. For had not these two small ships parted from us, we would not have miscarried on the coast of Brazile; for the only decay of us was, that we could not get into their barred harbours. The short of all this is, Davis his only intent was to overthrow me, which he hath well performed.'

He was joined by the 'Roebuck;' and he might, perhaps, have retrieved his fortunes, but the daring man again committed an error. He attacked Spirito Santo; was unsuccessful; then the 'Roebuck' left him furtively in the night, taking also all his surgeons. His ship was full of the sick and wounded: in an agony he writes:—

'These villaines, having left in mine own ship all their hurt men, and having aboard of them both my surgeons, I having not one in mine own ship which knew how to lay a plaister to a wound, much less to cure any by salves, and having, further, in their ships three times the proportion of my victuals, I leave you to consider of this pact of theirs, and the miserable case I was left in.'

Fain would he have sailed again for Magellan; for his brave, breaking heart was undaunted. But his mutinous crew insisted on his returning to England. The very thought of doing so was shame and agony to him. 'I desired,' he wrote, 'rather to die in going forward than basely in returning back again.' But he was no longer master of his own actions: several attempts did he make to approach the island of St. Helena; but home! home! was still the cry of his sailors. But

'home' was no home to the broken-spirited navigator.

A mystery hangs over the place and time of his death. He came as far as eight degrees northern latitude in his way to his native shore; but here the tale of this brave Cavendish abruptly ends. Let us close it with his own most touching words in the last letter that he wrote. It is addressed to Sir Tristram Gorges, his executor, but when written, or how sent to England, does not appear. One thing was evident, that the mind that dictated it was still vigorous; but the hand that penned it was wasted and feeble.

'Most loving friend,' it begins, 'there is nothing in this world that makes a truer triall of friendship than, at death, to shew mindfulness of love and friendship, which now you shall make a perfect experience of, desiring you to hold my love as deare, dying poore, as if I had been infinitely rich. The successe of this most unfortunate action, the bitter torments whereof I ye so heavie upon mee, as with much paine am I able to write these few lines, still lesse to make discoverie to you of all the adverse haps that have befallen me in this voyage—the least whereof is my death.'

Who would recognize in these touching lines the once *débonnaire*, popular Cavendish? What a tale he tells as he proceeds!

'But now,' he continues, 'I am grown so weake and faint as I am scarce able to hold the penne in my hand; wherefore I must leave you to inquire of the rest of our most unhappy proceedings; and now, by this, what with grieffe for him' (his cousin, John Locke), 'and the continual trouble I endured among such hell-hounds' (the ship's crew), 'my spirits were cleane spent—wishing myself in any desart place in the world, there to dye, rather than basely to returne.'

Embued with these feelings, Cavendish, he says, would have followed out this course could he have found an island—'which the charts make to be eight degrees to the southward of the line.' He sought it with all diligence, in hopes

there to have ended his unfortunate life. 'But God suffered not such happiness to light upon me; for I could by no meanes find it' (the island); 'so, as I was forced to go towards England, and having gotten eight degrees by north the line, I lost my most dearest cousin.' Then he adds, 'Beare with this scribbling; for I protest I am scant able to hold a penne in my hand.'

Thus passed away a brave man, of whom it was remarked that 'No man ever compassed the globe in so little time as he did: no man ever did greater things abroad, and returned to his country in greater pomp and triumph, than he did,' after his first voyage.

The admiral's cousin had exhibited to the admiring world the success which prudence and fidelity, patience, and all the host of virtues tend to insure. Doubtless, many a domestic lecture pointed the moral of these two careers. Thomas, the spendthrift, driven to foreign enterprise, and dying broken-hearted, a ruined penitent. William, the virtuous, early provided for, not only by a settlement on him of certain lands by his father, but—a far more secure provision—an establishment in the household of the all-powerful Wolsey. Thomas, the bachelor, never able to form even one *parti*. William, the connubial, marrying three times: twice, worthily and reputably, and the last time, magnificently—as those who know the life and actions of Bess of Hardwick, his third spouse, could amply testify.

William Cavendish was in good training for the subjection due to so imperious a lady as this same third wife, Bess of Hardwick. What would our young nobility, or our young commoners, think now-a-days if they were sent to study manners, and to wait at table in the houses of some nobleman high in royal favour, or of some prelate? say, for instance, if an earl were to request, as an immense favour, that Lord Palmerston would allow his eldest son to bed and board at Broadlands, to wait on his lordship on all state occasions; to be his cupbearer at dinner—his equerry

and page in one; to hold his lordship's great-coat for him—intensely gratified with the honour, nevertheless; and to stand outside the drawing-room door, with my lord's hat ready brushed, like a valet?

Yet, in the early days of the Cavendishes, and down almost to the Revolution of 1688, a nobleman, not possessed of political patronage, would have thought himself fortunate to have achieved such a point with the then Lord Keeper, or Lord Chamberlain. Our youth have now as much discipline at college as their modern notions can stand. How would a young sprig of aristocracy look at his father if, on leaving the delights of Peckwater quad., or Merton, the excellent parent sent for him, and said: 'Ernest,' or 'Cecil,' or 'Reginald' (we have few Johns and Richards now—few of these honest old standard English names; nay, the Ernests, and Cecils, and Reginalds are coming down to our shopkeepers now)—'Ernest! I have been so fortunate, through great interest, as to get the Bishop of Durham to take you into his palace at Bishop Auckland, to write his lordship's private notes; to attend him in his lay-visits; to see that his pens are mended; to hold the umbrella over him when his lordship walks,' &c., &c. (Heaven knows what the *et ceteræ* would comprise!) 'And, in return for this great condescension, and wonderful opportunity of learning how to behave yourself, you are to be licked into shape, if the thing can be done' (and the father looks at him sternly); 'and you will also be allowed to dine at the far-end of his lordship's table, where, indeed, champagne is not allowed; but you will have a certain allowance of port and sherry, and you will be conveniently lodged, so that you may rise betimes—that is to say, about six in the morning, and have the honour of waiting for my lord bishop, and receiving his commands in the antechamber.'

Yet similar to these were the addresses of anxious fathers to young sons as they grew up to manhood, and had to be put forward well in the world.

Thomas Cavendish, the father of Wolsey's Cavendish (one of the half-dozen Williams it falls justly to our lot to celebrate), esteemed himself fortunate in even belonging to the same county as that in which Wolsey—some say, behind a butcher's stall in Ipswich—first saw the light. It was a claim upon the cardinal; and the cardinal did not forget that they owned such contiguity. He had the greatness of soul to love the early associations with his birth-place, and to cherish the natives of the ugliest county in England.

So he received William Cavendish as one of the gentlemen-ushers of his bedchamber (a sort of functionary to fetch his slippers, and put on his eminence's nightcap); and Cavendish—would that his name were not William!—found himself in good company. Nine or ten young lords were in the archiepiscopal palace, and amongst them Henry Percy, afterwards Earl of Northumberland—Harry the Unthrif, as he was too justly called: he, who loved Anne Boleyn, yet forsook her when a word from him might have saved her. There was also the Earl of Derby. Now these young lords and gentlemen, though they could wait upon the cardinal, could not wait upon themselves, and had each three servants under them; Lord Derby had five.

Cavendish (William I.) was taken more specially into Wolsey's confidence than any of his comrades; and with great reason; for he was a man, from first to last, of honour and integrity, with a warm heart and a cool head; and a man of acquirements also; and a steady as well as devoted admirer of Wolsey's great qualities, as his dedication of his famous 'Life of Wolsey' to the Marquis of Dorset shows. 'The cardinal,' he wrote, 'was my lord and master, whom, in his lifetime, I served; and so remained with him to his fall continually, during the time of all his troubles, both in the south and north parts, until he died; during which time I punctually observed all his demeanours, as also his great triumphs, and glorious estate, &c. Nevertheless, whatsoever any man hath conceived of him

in his life, or since his death, this much I dare say, without offence, if any, that in my judgment I have never seen this realm in better obedience and quiet than it was in the time of his authority; nor justice better administered, without partiality, as I could justly prove, if I should not be taxed with too much affection.'

It was not until Wolsey had arrived at the height of his short-lived splendour that Cavendish entered his service; for it was in 1515, when William was only ten years old, that Wolsey was created a cardinal of the sacred college on the banks of the Tiber. We must therefore fancy the astonishment of the fresh-caught fish out of Suffolk when he found himself swimming in the same stream with the great cardinal. Picture to yourselves, gentle or ungente readers, the country bumpkin, fresh from a Suffolk manor-house—fresh from hunting and hawking—fresh from the contemplation of those famous old churches with round towers; and ignorant that there was anything grander in life than the then petrified-looking town of Ipswich—fresh from Suffolk dumplings, and imbued, perhaps, with the true Suffolk dialect,—fancy him entering the archiepiscopal palace of York House in, what has long been to us, old Whitehall. What James I. first called White Hall was, when Cavendish was transplanted to London, York House. It was built by Hubert de Burgh: by him given to a convent of Black Friars in Holborn; by them sold to the Archbishop of York in 1248; and during three centuries it preserved the name of York House; and Wolsey was its last archiepiscopal owner. It then became White Hall.

Let us see young William as he enters the gallery. No one understood scenic effects better than Wolsey. There, on divers tables, hang rich stuffs of silk in whole pieces, also velvets and cloth of divers colours. Young Cavendish has scarcely time to marvel when his eye is caught by a suit of copes hanging against walls covered with

gold and silver tissue—and these copes were the richest ever known in England. The dazzled youth passes on, and comes into the Gilt Chamber and the Council Chamber, wherein the same—what we should rather call vulgar—display went on. But display is the feature of half-educated times; and Wolsey, whilst he probably despised it in his heart, knew its influence.

And Cavendish advances. What portly form is it that emerges from the extremity of that gorgeous gallery? He forms, indeed, the central figure of a group of noblemen, of chaplains, and secretaries, and heaven knows what. All eyes rest on him.

That figure, so full of dignity—not, indeed, of the refined stamp—is clad in silk and satins of the richest scarlet dye; his stockings, woollen indeed, are purple. Costly shoes of silver gilt, and inlaid with pearls and diamonds, tread the oak floor. Singularly enough, few, if any, full portraits of Wolsey remain. He has usually been depicted in purple; and that profile is symmetrical rather than handsome, and his cheeks are full, and there is a look of self-indulgence about his face; but all agree as to his courteousness, and even jocularity, his princely demeanour, and his readiness in conversation. His figure was set off by the costly dress of those around him; and thus, glistening in an hitherto unknown splendour of sacerdotal attire, Wolsey appears in the council chamber of York House; where all is silver and panel gilt; where a cupboard under one window displayed plate of solid gold enriched with pearls and precious stones.

Yet Cavendish seems not to have been dazzled so much by all the ostentation of a man whose ewer and towel at dinner even noblemen were proud to hand, as by the loftiness of intellect, the courage, and the vast designs and strong will of him whom he served until death.

These were William Cavendish's sunny days. Those of his master were not wholly passed in jollity and state, but in so rapid a development of reforms as has never before

nor since been exhibited in England. Oxford endowed to that all-powerful influence—seven new professorships; the College of Physicians formed; a free school, or college, at Ipswich erected. These were but a portion of the grand schemes planned by the cardinal.

Then, what a knowledge he had of young men and their tendencies! Witness, as he was about to set sail for Calais on his embassy to France, his turning to the young

retinue who followed him, and instructing them in the nature of the French, 'who,' he remarked, 'at their first meeting, will be as familiar with you as if they had known you by long acquaintance, and will commune with you in the French tongue as if you knew every word: therefore use them in a kind manner, and be as familiar with them as they are with you. If they speak to you in their native tongue, speak to them in English; for if you un-

derstand not them, no more shall they you.' Then, turning to a Welsh gentleman, he said, 'Rice, speak thou Welsh to them; and doubt not but that thy speech will be more difficult to them than their French shall be to thee.'

What a pleasant lounge that gallery at York House must have been in these days, when king, and queen,

and ministers of state, bishops and chancellors, were almost always *en évidence* there! What grave faces when the heart-wrung speech of Katharine of Arragon was whispered by those who had heard the passionate appeal in the Court at Blackfriars: 'Of these my miseries I can accuse none but you, my Lord of York; because I could not away

with your monstrous pride, excessive riot, and intolerable oppression, wherefore do I now suffer; and because my nephew, the emperor, did not gratify your impatient ambition to advance you to the Papacy, you threatened to be revenged on him and his friends; and you have been true to your promise: you have been the plotter of the wars against me, and raised this doubt against me.'

Rely on it, all those eight or ten young lords, and fifteen knights, and forty squires, who composed the *élite* of Wolsey's household, were with him heart and soul, right or wrong; yea, even when in the insolence of power, instead of leaving the primate (Wareham, Archbishop of Canterbury) to summon a convocation at St. Paul's, Wolsey chose to have it in Westminster—a sight never seen in England before; whereon Skelton wrote:—

'Great Paul, lay down thy sword,
For Peter of Westminster hath shaven thy beard.'

And Peter of Westminster has ever since held his own, or rather maintained his usurpation, in that same spot.

Then even the grave, discreet Cavendish must have enjoyed, as young men scarce released from boyhood do enjoy, the carousals, the shows, and the splendour of York House.

Wolsey was the first to place the hierarchy amid the nobles of the land. See him, as he rides forth to visit 'the king's grace,' with his tippet of costly sables on his neck; his cardinal's hat of scarlet; his red silk gloves, whilst his hat is carried before him by a nobleman. As the cardinal rides along, the sun shines on something tall and glistening: it is the huge silver cross—nay, there are two of them—carried by stalwart priests; next come the staffbearers, and then the macebearer, all gorgeously in their several attire.

Was it false humility, or for safety, or for custom, or from his increasing corpulence, that Wolsey rode on a mule? A gallant bevy of young men follow him, nevertheless, on fine horses; and amongst these Cavendish is never absent, for the cardinal

could rarely spare him. Yea, in good fortune and ill fortune William Cavendish never left him; and he received his broken-spirited master's last sigh.

But all was soon to change: for a while there were pleasures devised for the king's consolation, as might be invented or by man's wit imagined. The banquets were set forth, with masques and mummeries, in so gorgeous a sort and costly manner, that it was heaven to behold. There was, however, no long continuance of heaven in those regions, but something of a very contrary description pervaded the place. Henry saw Anne Boleyn, and the cardinal was ruined. One contemptible act of royal malice was to prohibit any one from calling York House by that ancient name. It was to be White Hall, owing, it has been suggested, to the freshness and whiteness of Wolsey's new buildings; and thus Shakespeare refers to this change: one gentleman, in giving to another a description of Anne Boleyn's coronation, says—

'So she parted,
And with the same full state pac'd back again
To York Place, where the feast is held.
1 *Gent.* Sir,
You must no more call it York Place;
that is past:
For since the cardinal fell that title's
lost;
'Tis now the King's, and called White
Hall.
2 *Gent.* I know it;
But 'tis so lately altered, that the old
name
Is fresh about me.'

Not only did Cavendish receive Wolsey's last sigh; he waited to see him buried before he presented himself at Court. It is something to Henry's credit that he took the faithful servant into his own household. During eleven years the fortunes of Cavendish prospered. Pickings and choosings out of the surrenders of religious houses—of which he was one of the commissioners—grants of land, first from Henry, then from Edward VI.; offices about court, and successful marriages, laid the foundations of that vast inheritance centred in one family, which is now owned by the Cavendishes.

Until his third marriage William Cavendish was not so happy as to have a family to rear. His first wife, one of the Bostocks of Cheshire, had issue, indeed, but all died in childhood. His second, Mary Parker, of Pollingford in Suffolk, brought him no children. She died in 1542; and her husband, being then only thirty-seven years of age, married again, and his choice fell upon Elizabeth, the widow of Thomas Barley, Esq., and one of the most wealthy as well as the most gifted women of her age.

Elizabeth Hardwick, afterwards Mistress or Madam Barley; then the wife of William Cavendish; next the lady of Sir William St. Loo; and lastly Countess of Shrewsbury, was the daughter of John Hardwick of Hardwick Castle. She was scarcely fourteen at the time of her first marriage, which was childless. Twelve years of widowhood had elapsed before she married again: she could then have been only twenty-six years old, and she was then in the zenith of her beauty. Her talents, her determined character, and her wonderful energy, united to her great wealth, rendered her, indeed, a most desirable wife for an ambitious man; for of the art of rising in the world no one was an abler practitioner than Elizabeth of Hardwick.

The lasting monument of her triumphs is the old Hall of Hardwick, which, through her, came into the possession of the Cavendish family. England has nothing more quaint, the Continent nothing half so perfect in its way, as Hardwick. As you drive along a ridge of ground near the eastern borders of Derbyshire, the towers of this edifice appear before you, amid the ancient oaks of a stately park. The battlements of these towers are of carved open

work, in which, under a coronet—the last achievement of her ambition—appear the letters E. S., ‘Elizabeth Shrewsbury.’ You approach the Hall, and enter a spacious court, now laid out in flower-beds, each bright parterre shaped out in the letters E. S. This, of course, is a modern arrangement, for our ancestors had few garden flowers to boast of. As you turn into the court your eye is caught by the lofty towers at each corner of the house, and by the marvellous number and size of the windows. Daylight seems to have been mightily prized by E. S.; you are startled, nevertheless, by an object to the right, as you enter the garden, that gives you the same sensation as if a withered corpse lay before you, whilst a fair and healthy body was beside it. The dilapidated remains of a still more ancient edifice than that which we now call old Hardwick Hall, recall to you the Hardwicks of the troublous times of Henry VII. There they lived, and E. S. spared the ruined house to snow, perhaps, what her ancestors were, and in what state they lived. To our minds, the proportions of this fragment are finer than those of the elegant but staring Hall beside it. Some lofty chambers are still traceable in this crumbling edifice; and Kennet, in his ‘History of the Cavendishes,’ tells us that one of these is of such beautiful proportions, that when Blenheim was built ‘it was thought fit for a pattern of measure and contrivance for one room in that grand palace.’ This ruin was not, therefore, in Anne’s reign, the ‘ancient solitary domain of the moping owl,’ but was probably still habitable, and may have been quite entire when the new Hall was begun.



THE PILGRIMS OF THE RHINE.

(A New Version.)

AT once say that Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton's charming little book has suggested this title to me; for a subject, nevertheless, which greatly differs from his own. The characters of the fable-world of Germany—truly there was never anything cleverer than the wooing of Master Fox—as much as his management of the German ballad, attest Sir Edward's extraordinary genius and versatility. The earnest, enslaved lover, the calm, bowed-down father, the beautiful maiden, whose beauty is the beauty of decay, form a group of pilgrims in search of health along the shores of the Rhine. It is now an understood fact that novelists ought to retain standing counsel to keep them right in their law; they ought also to fee a physician to insure the accuracy of the medical

element in a story. I suspect Miss Trevelyan's friends were very ill advised when they allowed her to 'do' the Rhine in the last days of a consumption. Embarking at Rotterdam, the party steadily pursue the voyage till they turn aside to visit Heidelberg, and the final interest of the story is transferred from the banks of the Rhine to those of the Neckar. The 'Hyperion' of Longfellow is perhaps the most celebrated instance of the grave poetic treatment, the management of the poetry and legend connected with the immemorial river, though the dramatic interest of the story centres at last in Switzerland. The literature of the Rhine is, however, a voluminous subject, including among its most popular names those of M. Dumas and Mr. Thackeray. That earnest pilgrim spirit is still, I would hope, often evoked among those who visit the Rhine, although I am afraid the great majority of the modern pilgrims too often resemble our friends the Kickleburys. The little enthusiasm which they possess is not much more than what is derived from the successful opera, 'Lurline.' However the tourist spirit may be desecrating in effect, it finds no place in the German mind—full of reverential awe and love for the mighty river of the Fatherland. The Gaul may theorise after Thiers '*sur les frontières naturelles*,' but sword and song will maintain an equal chime—

'Have it—they shall not have it,
Our free-born German Rhine!'

To them its waters are dear beyond Garonne or Guadalquivir, or all Hesperian streams. They are even invested with the solemn mystery and religion that invests the Nile or the Jordan. How nobly does one of her noblest daughters speak of 'that heroic river which nations never cross without buckling on their armour for the fight!' 'On the Rhine I am never more than twenty years old,' adds the Countess Ida Hahn-Hahn.

Let us imagine a band of ancient pilgrims, veritable pilgrims of the vanished ages, 'ages of faith,' as they are sometimes called. Mr. Lytton has very well imagined such a pilgrimage in the poem of 'Tannhäuser,'

that successful transcript of the libretto of an unsuccessful opera:—

'Came, faintly heard along the filmy air,
That bore it floating near, a choral chant
Of pilgrims pacing by the castle wall;
And "Salvum me fac Domine" they sang
Sonorous, in the ghostly going out
Of the red-litten eve along the land.'

Let us imagine that our pilgrims are bound, not for Rome, but for the shrine of some saint that hallowed the neighbouring Rhine, a shrine more renowned than that of the Three Kings—say of the good Saint Goar, the apostle of these shores in barbaric ages, who has bequeathed his name to Goarhausen and St. Goar. Hard work this before the *Route Napoleon*! The dangers of the river and the forest were real enough in those old days—old days when the pilgrims might meet in lonely recess with a slaughtered man, where the cord, the dagger, and the parchment proclaimed the work of the Holy Vehm; that Holy Vehm whose deadly doings are probably still attested by the dungeons of Baden. Old days, when from point to point of the river the Free Knights exacted toll, and from their barbaric overhanging castle lorded it over land and flood. Old days when the rough, rude sense of justice and the thought of liberty glimmered on the German mind and resulted in the Confederation of the Rhine and the Hanseatic League. Old days, when the pilgrims crossed themselves, dreaming they caught the echo of the unholy song of the siren of the Lurlei. Old days, when the wayside cross and the wayside Madonna arrested the pilgrim's steps and suggested thoughts of security and peace amid scenes of solitude and danger; and, hark! stealing over the Rhine waters or heard remote in forest glens, from some secluded monastery, comes the vesper chant. Thus the pilgrims of the Rhine reach the sacred destination, with eyes not undimmed with penitential tears or hearts unhealed with a sense of pardon. Such scenes do my subject suggest; romantic, if you will, but I think veritable. But how and whither do the modern pilgrims wend their way? bound to what shrine, guided by what influence?

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Ah me! a shrill whistle breaks the momentary reverie. We are at Coblenz. The huge hotels line the shore, the shipping is stationary at the wharf, the bridge of boats is ready to give place to us. A momentary look at Ehrenbreitstein bristling with cannon; a momentary look at the broad space where the waters of the Moselle mingle with those of the Rhine; soon we are past the purple heights of Pfaffendorf. And now there is a commotion on board. The modern pilgrim approaches one of his favourite shrines. Stolzenfels is behind us—once a robber fortress—then a dismantled ruin to be sold for a few pounds—and now one of the most glorious modern castles to be found in the fatherland. On the right-hand side is the ruined keep of Lahneck; and here the rapid Lahn, gliding over its shallow bed, joins its tributary stream to the Rhine. At this point passengers for Ems disembark. There are the healing fountains of nature o'ercanopied by the wooded hills of Nassau, and there are the gaming-tables which do so much to counteract their beneficial effect. There some of the pilgrims carry their ruined health, and others their ruined reputation.

Some modern pilgrims of the Rhine are in such a hurry to reach this fashionable and favourite watering-place that the passage of the river is perhaps the only glimpse they have obtained of it. They have seen, this time at least, nothing of the glories of the Rhine between Coblenz and Bonn; they have neither climbed the Drachenfels nor walked in the pleasant grounds of Neuwied. They have come down from Aix by express train; the speediest, as the Rhine route, all along the river from Rotterdam, is the longest and most tedious. Some are going to Ems, some to Wiesbaden, some to Baden-Baden. Most of them will be sure to visit Frankfurt and Heidelberg; some will push on to Switzerland. One or two are on a pilgrimage practical enough. They are going to work through the wine country with a view to bar-

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gains. What longing eyes will they lift to the Metternich Château! Will they envy the good old monks of old who had the vineyard of Johannisberg attached to their abbey of St. John? I confess I should like to drink Johannisberg once or twice in a way. Popkins reminds me that I have tasted it at his table. Excuse me, Popkins, but don't you remember that we investigated the subject and came to the conclusion that it was in reality the wine of Rüdesheim? De Tabley is also sure that I have had Johannisberg in the De Tabley halls. Excuse me, my distinguished friend; your cellar is, I know, proverbially good, and knowing all about your father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and ancestors, I wish unhesitatingly to take another glass of that port. But Johannisberg—Johannisberg of the comet year—I cannot flatter myself with ever having tasted, and must console myself with recollections of Steinberg cabinet. I do not see how I could do so unless, like Mr. Roebuck, I were on intimate terms with a lot of emperors. An emperor would have to buy it at the rate of a guinea a bottle, and so I scarcely see how an innkeeper can give it for a Napoleon. I believe, however, that innkeepers cannot, practically, enter into the competition for its purchase. The produce of the vineyards that adjoin the Johannisberg vineyard is, I suspect, ambitiously called Johannisberg, and also vines planted elsewhere from the Johannisberg grape. I do not profess to speak scientifically of the Rheingau, but any one who has wandered on the right bank of the Rhine, and extends his travels to the Taunus, picks up his own ideas on the subject. When I have deserted the region of hotels and roamed the pleasant countryside, I have found extremely pleasant light wines at a price, say one-fifth of the hotel prices. And what a pleasant countryside it is! How, and in how honest a fashion, with what freedom and glee, do the people smoke and quaff! Happy indeed seems the lot of the free German peasant, sitting 'beneath the shadow of his own vine.'

A very genuine pilgrimage is to travel up the Rhine from its exit to its source. But, properly speaking, the Rhine has no exit. It is lost in the multitudinous sands, and it is only in the present century that Katwijk enables us to speak formally of the mouth of the Rhine. Here an artificial channel has been formed, with floodgates stronger and more ingenious than any in Europe. Before this the remnant of the noble river escaped by insignificant dribblets into the sea, type of many a noble career, once broad and rushing as a river but wasted at last amid the sands. Let me recal the now distant day when I wandered through the streets of Leyden, visiting the famous museum and thinking of poor Oliver Goldsmith. I was about to take my first peep of the Rhine, and it was indeed a disappointment to see the sluggish, slimy canal, which bears the title of the Rhine—that one of the parting streams of the old majestic Rhine to which the name is preserved. It is not without some hesitation that I would recommend the pilgrim to ascend the river. Murray advises you not to do so, but a man of independent mind cannot consent to be evermore shackled by those everlasting red books. In Sir Bulwer Lytton's works the Trevelyans ascend the stream, but I really do not know what they would see beyond the towers of churches and the wheels of windmills. It is all very well to see Holland, and I would earnestly recommend the travellers not to rush across the country, but to spend some time on this interesting country; only you do *not* see the country this way. Still you attain a certain pause in the hurry of travelling—a certain quaint quietness—a certain curious variety of uniformity which is not without its charm. A compromise is the best thing. This I did myself, taking the rail from Amsterdam to Arnheim. The great cities of Holland are crowded together on the line between Rotterdam and Amsterdam, so that you may attain an idea of the country in an incredibly short time, just as in travelling from Brussels to Ostend, I have known

Bruges, Antwerp, and Ghent to have been investigated after a sort in four-and-twenty hours. Still it is wearisome work fighting against the current the wearisome way till you come to Cologne. You have a need of pleasant books, you have need of pleasant friends, and you have also a need, as you again and again pace the deck, to be one of those few men who are capable of continuous, solitary thought. But you reach Cologne, you go and see the bones of the eleven thousand virgins, 'Prosit mihi vos dicisse puellas,' as old Persius hath it; for I felt doubts whether those virginal bones are all really human. I remember bearing off from Farina's shop some of his eau-de-Cologne, and breaking one of his bottles in the railway-carriage. When I explained the nature of the catastrophe to my fellow-travellers, there was a rush of French and German handkerchiefs to the spot of my disaster. A rose-leaf also—ah, those memorial rose-leaves!—is one of my mementos of Cologne, plucked from a wild rose-tree blossoming on the very height of the unfinished tower, sprung from some seed dropped perchance by a wandering bird. Still the country is flat till you have passed by Bonn. A leisurely man would do well to spend a few days there, still better to spend a few months there, if he retains or has ever had a student's zeal. And now the country of the Seven Hills closes round you, and the pilgrim scales the Drachenfels, where he is delighted by the glimpse of the silvery reaches of the river, although he is probably disappointed with the item of 'peasant girls with deep-blue eyes.' It is rather trite to insist upon it, but no one who has travelled much on the river can be ignorant of the necessity of the admonition, that the traveller ought constantly to leave the river and take to the hills if he wishes really to understand and appreciate the country. What pleasant walks do I remember on that elevated table-land which lies between this river and the Moselle, swept by the pure Rhine breezes, and overlooking such perfect scenery! Pleasant it was,

too, in roaming through the country villages to encounter scenes of heartily-enjoyed festival occasions, when we detected, even in the gathering of peasants, the full force of song and sentiment over the German mind. You will perceive that our pilgrim has left the Drachenfels behind him. They told me of a wondrous accident that had befallen a village nestled among the Seven Hills; how a mighty cloud had burst over it and swept away hundreds in the torrents of its waters. We are now arrived at the point we reached just now; our boat is lying against the railway pier for Ems.

Onwards from that point so many know the route, and so many more have read concerning it. You see the travellers clustering together, referring to their maps and consulting their guide-books, as ever and again a boat is dropped off to meet the steamer, or the steamer settles by the side of a pier. Every quarter of an hour a place is jotted off, a mere gleam of a passing view is obtained: the average pilgrim is quite satisfied with this and with a reference to Murray for a scrap of history or anecdote. Rather a curious confusion of ideas must in this way be produced in the mind. It must be repeated that only a residence of some little time on the Rhine, with the habit of dropping from place to place, added to an acquaintance with the exterior, or, at least, the bordering heights, can convey an adequate idea of Rhineland. The interest of some places is purely historical, and their present condition can offer no possible point of sympathy to that numerous class who have an awe-inspiring depth of ignorance on all historical subjects. Thus, when we come to Reuse, on the left side, it is not at all exciting to look at a heap of rubbish in a potato-field: this heap of rubbish and few stones are the remains of a memorable pillared octagon, where Maximilian took the oaths—where various treaties were concluded—where emperors have been elected and deposed. The geographical position of the place was an important point in troublous times; and from Reuse various

electors would, in the course of a few minutes, find their way into their own territory. On the opposite side the interest attaching to Marksburg Castle, overlooking Braubach, is much more intelligible, and is the only really perfect and unsophisticated fortress of the Red Land, as the shores of the Rhine have been called, not inappropriately, from battle memories. I notice that Murray has a sentence about it which Mrs. Radcliffe might envy: 'An old castle, with mysterious narrow passages, winding stairs, vaults hewn in the living rock, which served in former days as dungeons, and, above all, a chamber of torture (Folterkammer), where the rack still exists, as well as the instruments with which offenders were executed by strangling; a secret passage is said to pass down through the rock to a tower on the borders of the river.' That is not a bad kind of site for the scene of a romantic story. I see that our friend Murray, when he gets a little higher to Boppard, quotes a passage from Bulwer, apropos to the convent of Marienburg, but does not give a reference to the Pilgrims of the Rhine, which would be more accurate and more advisable. But of all Rhineland castles, the fortress of Rheinfels for me possesses a surpassing interest. If you are staying at Goarshausen, where the scenery is rather a pretty introduction to Switzerland, to those who wisely visit the Rhine first, you only cross the river, and it is not worth while to take a carriage to Rheinfels, as the walk is pleasant and very short, if you do not make, as I did, a mistake in the turning. Marshal Saxe promised the castle as a new year's present to his master, the Ludovicus Magnus; but he did not take the place within the prescribed limits of time, nor yet at all. You of course remember, at Paris, that pompous inscription on the arch of the Porte St. Denis, which has been erected to Ludovicus Magnus, for having crossed the Rhine and conquered a certain number of places within a certain number of days. The pas-

sage of the Rhine has been celebrated in the verse of Boileau and the prose of Madame de Sévigné, but according to Prior there are doubts about it:—

'When thy young muse invoked the tuneful Nine,
To say how Louis did *not* pass the Rhine.'

Voltaire considers that these were Prior's two best lines. It was under the cruel orders of Louis XIV. that Heidelberg Castle was so cruelly devastated—twice bombarded by Turenne. It was, I think, Francis I. who contented himself with the peaceful triumph of having his horses led to drink of the waters of the Rhine. The later wars, with the history of which Rhine literature is inseparably bound up, were, of course, the Thirty Years' War, the wars of Louis Quatorze, and the revolutionary wars. To appreciate the Lurleiberg above St. Goar one should be able to realize the Undine legends. The Rhine has quite a literature of its own, and its diligent student will find gleanings that have escaped the ubiquitous Murray. Let it be remembered that the right bank from the point we mentioned—the junction of the Lahn with the Rhine, so far as Biberich—is the territory of the Duke of Nassau. For the Brunnen of Nassau, I presume the reader is familiar with Sir Francis Head's amusing volume, the 'Bubbles': few books have had so directly practical an effect. Sir Francis has popularized Schwalbach and Schlangenbad; he—that is to say, his book—has laid out spacious gardens and fine terraces, and adorned them with magnificent hotels. Ladies, of course, were delirious to bathe in these cosmetic waters, even though they were 'as thick as a horse-pond, and about the colour of mulligatawny soup;' for they were told that their limbs would become as white as marble; that all the wrinkles of time and care would be effaced; that the healing fount is infinitely softer than milk, and infinitely soothing to the nerves. For watering-place amusements, however, more or less questionable, one must go to Ems and Wiesbaden. It is to the Nassau

Rhine and the opposite bank that the epithet 'castellated' is chiefly due, and of which the vivid lines, among the most vivid of the clever and eloquent Byron, are most true:—

'Blending all beauties—streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, corn-field, mountain,
vine,
And chieftless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where ruin greenly
dwells.'

There is no bourne to which the thoughtful, or rather the thoughtless, pilgrim, more frequently wends his way than to Homburg; there is, with a vengeance, 'speculation in his eye.' Homburg is, of course, the place which the Kickleburys visit, and after the usual Thackeray manner: M. Lenoir is the altered name of the famous proprietor, M. Blanc. A recent French work, 'Les Tripots d'Allemagne,' by Alfred Sirven, gives some curious information about gaming-houses here and elsewhere. A great many people go to Homburg on false pretences: they don't care for that wicked Hades—they are only visiting dear, antique, interesting Frankfort; they want to look at the Dom; they want to see the house where Luther lived, and where he is represented with the Bible in his hands; then they must see the picture-gallery, the river and the city's garden-belt, and they would not for the world miss Dannecker's 'Ariadne.' I think it is with a genuine interest that most people go to the Judengasse, and look at the house, with the iron-plated door, where the Rothschilds were born. The old lady, though she might spend her days in a splendid abode, would always return at night, and sleep 'where the money was made.' They keep early hours at Frankfort. My first night there, I thought that after an early supper I would go out and see the town. However, I discovered at an incredibly early hour for a large city that there was no town, that the town had shut up and gone to bed. Returning disconsolately to my hotel, I was struck by a majestic figure placidly standing before the gate. For a moment I was uncertain, but then the truth flashed upon my mind—that look of

calm superiority, that unruffled equanimity, those fixed features, that elegantly-turned calf, it *was*, it *must be*—THE BRITISH FLUNKEY. Meeting on foreign soil, I addressed some remarks to him. The magnificent creature deigned an affable response.

'You are in service here?'

'With Lady ——,' was the answer.

'Where have you been travelling?'

'Don't know.'

'Do you know the name of the last place you came from?'

'Don't know.'

'What is the name of the city where you are now?'

'Don't know.'

With feelings of deep awe I respectfully wished him good night.

And then Homburg is so near to Frankfort, and the new railway is so very handy! But this affectation is quite unnecessary. Every sensible man knows he does quite right in going to Homburg if only he keeps on the right side. The rooms and music are pleasant—pleasant the park and garden—pleasant the cool drives in the deep forest—pleasant the pure breeze and the wide prospect when you have gained some one of the Taunus ridges. One likes to detect a sort of English style, and to talk of the bygone Landgravine, the English Princess Elizabeth. The spring has valuable medical qualities, good for decayed livers and that class of disorders. The good which is done at the spring is often undone by the harm that is wrought at the Kur-saal. The town is regularly built, and, as usual, there is a chaplain for the English, who, wherever they are, attend to the decencies and respectabilities. This little state comprises a dominion of some twenty square miles, over which the Landgrave of Hesse-Homburg is lord. He is an old man now, near eighty, and when his days are numbered, the system of the gaming-tables is to come to an end. It is high time it should. I think thirteen cases of suicide were reported a season or two ago. One ill-bred fellow had the rudeness to blow out his brains

before very polite company. These cases of suicide, however, are sometimes 'sophisticated.' M. Sirven tells us of a case of this kind. The bank are very sensitive about any malign rumours of suicide, and stifle subjects so unpleasant. A man tied a rope to the branch of a tree, taking care to be near a sentry, waited till he saw some people coming, and then hung himself. An outcry was raised, and the sentry rushing forward, cut him down immediately. Great commiseration was elicited, and the bank thought it only decent to present him with a thousand francs. Three months later the fellow did the same thing again. The case was suspicious enough. The bank, however, thought it best to shed some more money, coupling their donation with the request that in future he would be so good as to hang somewhere else. But there are cheating and trickery about the whole thing, and on an organized system. Thus there are 'gentlemen professors and lady bonnets.' The professor gives himself a title, dresses handsomely, assumes the man of fashion, entices the victim; he has a regular retaining fee and constant refreshers. Some of the current chronicle of the Spa is amusing. A certain Countess R——, an inveterate gamester, was reckoned by the bank to be worth some eight thousand a year to them. She was always at the roulette table, and always losing. She was on the high road to ruin, and was obliged to sell her carriage and horses. When this state of things had continued for a long time, the Countess took it into her head that perhaps she was doing wrong. Nothing contented her but to go to Rome itself, and there receive absolution. This was accorded her on condition that she should renounce play. She returned to Homburg, and was soon found playing as usual. As is usually the case, she provided a salvo for her conscience. 'I don't play for myself any more now,' she said, '*only for the poor.*' It is not an uncommon thing in Homburg for a player to be observed rushing out of the Kursaal, and presently re-

turning *minus* his watch and trinkets. Their value is speedily staked and speedily lost. A regular set of harpies are in attendance ready to prey upon the unfortunate. If one of them is known to be solvent, a money-lender is prepared to advance funds, say at 200 per cent. We are told that Parisian jewellers send their travellers to Homburg to pick up spoils. One story told is in remarkable contrast with the general experience. Two Prussian brothers really did play on a system, and really did win. One brother married a girl with a little fortune, and brought money to the attack. The other was a mathematician, and brought science. 'Every morning,' said the mathematician, 'a waiter cleans the roulette board with chalk, and has to rub certain parts, which are difficult to polish, harder than the rest. Portions of the copper surface are thus worn away, in a manner invisible to the eye, but noticeable by the results. The ivory ball is diverted by this circumstance from its ordinary channel. That is the reason why you see certain numbers frequently win on the same day, while others are never called.' Their manner of playing was as follows:—The mathematical man would come into the Kursaal two hours earlier than his brother. He did not put down any stake, but carefully noted all the winning numbers. His brother then speculated on these winning numbers. The very croupiers could not be more cool and calm. Their average daily winnings were a thousand francs, and when this was attained they ceased to play. It is the Homburg legend that they made a fortune of half a million of francs.

The bank is the property of a company, and of course the shareholders realize very large profits. After the salaries, the enormous rents, and the vast sums for the improvement of the city are expended, they still make forty per cent. of their money. The company are quite certain that though there may be a successful run upon them, yet in the long run the winner is certain to lose in the event. M. Blanc has said of a winning man, 'He

will bring back every louis he has won, and plenty more into the bargain.' When he was asked to advise a colour, he said, 'Red or black, whichever you please.' White (Blanc) will be sure to win.'

Let us turn aside, however, from these unworthy pilgrims, and follow those who are willing in these modern days to be real pilgrims of the Rhine, and seek nature in one of her most retired and sacred shrines.

It is at Basle that the average tourist obtains a later, and frequently a final view of the Rhine. Here the river looks very beautiful, either as you hang over the bridge opposite the Trois Rois, or as you watch it from the famous Minster terrace, with the shade of the chestnuts overhead, and the music of the fountain in your rear, 'rushing past in a full broad flood of a clear, light green,' the Black Forest on the one side, and the Jura mountains on the other. The pilgrim, actuated by upward views, turns his face to the east. A railway for a considerable distance traverses the right, or Baden side of the Rhine. On the opposite shore one comes to Rheinfelden. The river is crossed by a wooden bridge, and is thrown by the rocks below into rapids and falls. At Laufenberg we meet with more rapids and more falls. There is of course no navigation. The boats, relieved of their cargoes, are conducted by means of ropes held by persons on the rocks, or they might be dashed to pieces. Lord Montague, a young English nobleman, in descending these rapids, lost his life, and on the very same day, the family mansion, Cowdray in Sussex, was burnt to the ground. The river then reaches Waldshat, the commencement of the Black Forest, and the first of the four forest towns. The Rhine, straitened between abrupt ranges of mountains, rushes forward in enormous volume. These minor *lauffen* prepare you for the Grosse Lauffen, as the falls at Schaffhausen are called, for the most part visited by travellers on the Zurich line. The tourist is told to examine those noble falls in every aspect, by day-

light, starlight, moonlight, the light of the rising and the setting sun. We must not, however, dwell on scenery which is exhaustively known. The pilgrim pursues his way to the upper founts. If he likes, he may now travel by water, for the river is now once more navigable even for large vessels, as far as the lake of Constance. From the lower to the upper lake the Rhine flows through a gorge, by the side of the city of Constance. In all ecclesiastical history Constance occupies a foremost place, and it is impossible to understand the age of the Reformation without appreciating the age of the councils. The lake scenery, subdued indeed in comparison of Lucerne, or even of Geneva, rather resembles that of the lower part of the Lago di Garda. In modern recollections the Baden shore is especially fertile. The beautiful little island of Meinan once belonged to the German Knights of Malta, and after it had relapsed into waste and neglect, it was purchased by Prince Esterhazy for a retreat, which he made almost paradisaical. In a farthest part of the Baden territory, where alone, through the timidity of the Baden court, she was permitted to dwell, dwelt in her cottage-mansion the solitary Queen Hortense. In his early years the present Emperor of the French resided here, brought up by that tender mother endowed with so much grace, genius, and accomplishments. It almost satisfies the wildest demands of poetic justice that the present emperor is no descendant of Napoleon's, but the grandson of Josephine. Here, then, in solitude was the strange boy brought—destined as a man to mature his genius in long spaces of solitude—hearing the stories of greatness and ruin, the long glories of the Empire, the fugitive splendours of the hundred days, the drear parting at Malmaison, the lasting exile from France. It is far down the shore at Rorschach, that the Rhine enters the lake, with a force which is felt on the opposite shore; the strong ripple in its confluence with other streams has been noticed by Ammianus Marcellinus. Gradually we

pass into the valley of the Rhine, where the Rhine is seen in its least favourable aspect. In the summer it is shrunk up into a narrow channel, and the wide bed is unsightly, with great spaces of sand and gravel; in the winter the waters rise and roar, overspread the bank, and threaten terrible inundations. And so we reach Coire, a central and a resting point.

We are now following the fortunes of an alpine torrent. But the Rhine is the castellated Rhine once more, even as below Mainz. There is a remarkable number of small castles on the heights overhanging the river. At Reichenau we have the confluence of the two principal streams of the Rhine. These are the Fore and the Back Rhine, the Vorder and Hinter Rhein. As the two arms of the river close together, we remark a strange contrast. The Fore Rhine has the largest sheet of limpid water, and the colour is a beautiful light green; the Back Rhine rolls along in a dark limpid stream. According to geographical law we must trace the source of the Rhine to the Back stream. But it nevertheless behoves the loving and diligent pilgrim to examine the source of the Vorder Rhine. He is often nearer to it than he imagines. Any traveller over the pass of the St. Gothard is within a manageable distance of it, when he is at Andernatt. I never thought of this as I sat in the little inn of Andernatt, regaling myself with the delicious red trout of the Oberalp. The thoughts of the traveller are then generally taken up with other streams than the Rhine. He is thinking of the Reuss behind him, as it has leapt in savage cataract beneath the Devil's Bridge, or looking forward to the Ticino as it rolls in limpid flood through the trembling valley and the soft Italian slopes. From Andernatt we walk to the Oberalp-see, about five miles, and begin to descend the north-eastern side of the St. Gothard. Here a little brook, pursuing its way through marshy ground, is pointed out as a source of the infant

Rhine. Several little rivulets fall into a small lake or tarn, which may be assumed as the source of the Fore Rhine. The Rhine stream issuing forth has 'a meeting of the waters' with two other rills, which with strict justice might also put forth their title.

But our pilgrim will content himself with finding the source of the Rhine in the Rheinwald glacier. We are now at the 'snowy Splügen Pass.' There are dread recollections of the Rhine at Splügen. The quiet villagers had just taken their tea one evening well remembered, when the Rhine burst its barriers, sweeping away houses and destroying human life. From Splügen, Murray tells us to make an expedition to the source of the Hinter Rhein, and take a day for it. Leaving the bridge at Splügen, we go along the Bernardino Pass. We reach Hinter-rhein, and there the pass leaves the river, and climbs the mountain along abrupt terraces and zig-zags. We too leave the bleak and barren village of Hinter-rhein, and ten miles up the valley seek the source of the mighty river. The snow-crowned hills are around you, and from the crevices multitudinous streamlets trickle down to feed the infant stream. On the slopes of the hills Italian shepherds pasture their flocks in the summer season. The path is rocky and troublesome, and to an unaided stranger unattainable. The young Rhine struggles over stones; on one side is the Morchel glacier, below which is a spot of marshy green called Paradise, and on the other side a rocky gorge called Hölle. By-and-by we come to the very extremity of the valley, and there, in scenery savage and sublime, and well worthy to be its cradle, is that dreary laboratory of nature in which the Rhine is fashioned from the streams dripping from the Rheinwald glacier. This glacier, spurring the Rhine waters, fills the depression between the Zaporthorn and the Rheinwaldhorn, towering to eleven thousand feet. The fountain-head in the glacier is sometimes hollowed out into a magnificent dome.



Drawn by T. Morten.

PICTURES IN THE CLOUDS.

"Bareheaded she advanced to the river's brink, and then there came upon her a dreadful thought. Her husband, her own cherished husband, was probably dead. Her last words with him had been words of anger. What was she to live for now? Why not die herself? She looked at the river, and her brain seemed as though bursting with the violence of her emotions. Suddenly the water sparkled with light. She looked upwards, and through a rift in the clouds the glorious sun came struggling bravely into sight, parting the murky vapours which drew off the evil spirits at the approach of holiness and purity. Might not this be a happy omen? Might not Charley yet live? Might—"

[See "Pictures in the Clouds."

PICTURES IN THE CLOUDS.

IT has been objected, and I think with reason, that one of the most glaring literary sins of the present day is that of familiarity. But in my opinion the charge applies only to the novelists, some of whom descend from their pedestal, leave their story and their characters to shift for themselves, and commence chattering with their readers in an off-hand, back-slapping, familiar manner, quite at variance with their dignity. Let these gentlemen stick to their tale, and content themselves, as the best of them always do, with weaving their woof of plot, and elaborating their dialogue. *Suum cuique*. To us essayists—who rather avoid the rushing streams and the tidal rivers, preferring to paddle quietly up retired backwaters, or to float dreamily on the unruffled bosoms of lakes—such familiarity is not merely natural, but necessary. We have no grand heroes who must be always in full periwig and court-suit, and who lose all respect if shown to the public in slippers and a dressing-gown; we have no daring adventures or hair-breadth 'scapes to relate: all our business is to prattle pleasantly in the reader's ear, to take him by the arm, lead him out of the broad walk into a by-path, and say, 'Look here, this is my view of the matter:' and the more familiarly you say it, the more you are likely to win his attention. Therefore it does not appear to me as at all out of the fitness of things for me to begin this little essay by stating how, and where, and under what circumstances it is composed.

I am holiday-making just now for three days; and that is a phrase which none but hard workers can understand or properly appreciate. The manufacture of holidays has a very wide and elastic signification. His Grace the Duke of Millecha-teaux understands holiday-making by running away from his wife, his acquaintances, his parasites, his usual surroundings, his magnificence, his rank, and his state; run-

ning away to a little shooting-box in the Highlands, whence he drives, accompanied by some half-dozen friends, at an early hour of the morning, to an adjacent moor, and whither he returns, at a late hour of the evening, thoroughly tired out, with just 'go' enough to take a bath, eat his dinner, smoke his pipe, and then retire to bed. Sir Jibson Taffrel makes holiday on board his yacht, coasting round England from Cowes to Lowestoft, with an occasional run to Cherbourg; to be called 'Sir' by tarry-trousered mariners and an amphibious boy; to wear a straw hat surrounded with a ribbon with 'Wave' printed on it, a pilot-jacket, and a pair of loose and perpetually-descending trousers; to roll in his gait, and to say, 'Ay, ay, sir!' instead of 'Yes,' forms the height of his ambition. Jack Gorman's holiday means ice and snow, ladders and ropes, lanterns which won't keep alight, and axes for cutting hand-holes and foot-supports. *Qui trans mare currunt* change, according to Jack's translation, not their constitution, but their climb, and so every autumn sees him *trans mare*, exchanging his pleasant chambers in King's Bench Walk for the wretchedest accommodation in Swiss, or Savoyard, or Tyrolese inns, drinking the thinnest *vin du pays*, or rum-tainted, mahogany-shaving essence, under the name of brandy, or bitter *kirsch*, instead of the wholesome port of the Oxford and Cambridge Club; and instead of the boon companionship of his friends, consorting with dirty boors from Zermatt, or garlic-reeking guides from Courmayeur. Many spend their holidays in carrying London with them to fashionable watering-places or foreign spas, and there doing exactly what they do at home; many others go on 'tours,' which means that they rush through two or three foreign countries at break-neck speed, seeing nothing, learning nothing, and utterly robbing themselves of that peaceful rest which nature requires.

At least such is my theory; so when I make holiday I am not ashamed to say that I do nothing, and do it remarkably well. On my desk in the French window lie the blotting-pad, the pile of 'slips' ready for writing, the huge ink-stand and the pen-tray filled with those rusty, blue-mouldy stumps of steel pens with which I am in the habit of driving printers to desperation: close by, on a little table, stands a heap of books for review, and on a porcelain slate at the right hand are jotted memoranda of subjects to be treated. But in my holiday I shake my fist at all these, and pass through the window after breakfast, with a cigar in my mouth, and after having unloosed big, black Nero, a retriever who is most demonstratively affectionate, and who can scarcely understand being freed from the chain at this early hour, I stroll on to the lawn, and smoke my cigar in peace, watching the gambols of the children the while. Ah! this is very pleasant. The lotus-eaters were perfectly right—

'There is no joy but calm.'

And I am bound to say I agree with them that 'surely, surely slumber is more sweet than toil.' If there were no such things as rent, and tradespeople, and school-bills to pay, I would never do another stroke of work as long as I lived. The old red-brick house where I reside glows in the sun, and the little, leaden-casemented, diamond-paned windows wink again. Oliver Cromwell lived here once! Ah! a very pushing man, far too energetic for my present ideas: it makes me quite hot to think of his energy, and his 'Take away that bauble,' and all his bumptiousness. He would have had a much happier life if he had done as I am doing—lain on his back on this broad lawn, and let things 'slide,' as the Yankees have it. I am not so far remote from the busy world but that I can hear the roar of London, lessened and modified by distance.

'In the distance hums the Babel
Of the many-footed town,'

as sings Mr. Alfred Austin, and a very sweet singer Mr. Austin is

when he's not wielding what people call 'the lash.' What nonsense it is, that wielding the lash: there is nobody worth hitting, at least in this weather. I have no doubt there are some dreary books among those on my table awaiting review; but rest ye, merry authors, no 'slating' will you receive at my hands: all the old conventionalities of expression shall be brought into play to let you down easily. It is in the winter that one likes to get hold of a dullard, when one's blood wants warming.

As I lie stretched supine, with my face turned up to the sky, I am sensible of many interruptions to my quiet thought. In the first place, there are 'things' in the grass, insects of some kind or another, which I am sufficiently cockneyfied not to know further than under the generic name of 'things,' that hum and buzz, and keep my hands perpetually engaged in slapping my ears, and flisking the 'things' from before my face; then I hear a dull thud on the turf close beside me, and simultaneously feel something wet and cold against my cheek, and then I discover that Nero has made the round of the garden, and come back to pay me a domiciliary visit of inspection. 'Get out, Nero! stand back, boy! You just stood between me and the sky while I was gazing at that lovely cluster of clouds, and seeing it melt into pictures as I gazed.'

Pictures in the Clouds! not a bad subject for reflection when lazy, for an essay when at work. There must be but a few of us indeed who have not, at one time or other, seen those lovely floating vapours assume various shapes, some light, loving, and graceful, others dark, lurid, and menacing. In all ages clouds seem to have attracted the attention of men, and called forth remark. What says the heavily-smitten, ever-enduring man of Uz, 'Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the battles of heaven when the mist groweth into hardness, and the clouds cleave fast together?' And the melancholy, soured, splenetic, large-souled, cynical Prince of Denmark, whose

quasi-madness has formed the text for psychologists for two hundred years, and even within the last month has been descanted on by Dr. Conolly,—does not he, in one of the most telling bits of his sarcasm, call an image from cloud-land for the discomfiture of old Polonius?

'Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale.

Pol. Very like a whale.'

I have often thought the roar of laughter which invariably peals at this last line somewhat unmerited, as far as Polonius is concerned; for although, thorough courtier that he is, and determined to fool the prince 'to the top of his bent,' he would say anything; yet in this instance he may have had some ground for his answers, as all those who have watched the clouds know how suddenly they change their form, and also how different their aspect appears to different gazers.

When I first strolled out on to the lawn, the sky was cloudless, all around was that 'blue unclouded weather,' in which Launcelot rode to Camelot past the fairy bower of Shalott's fated lady; 'there was not a cloud in the sky,' as Southey says in his 'Well of Saint Keyne,' or as Wordsworth beautifully expresses it—

'The charm of sky above my head
Is heaven's profoundest azure—an abyss
In which the everlasting stars abide,
And whose soft gloom and boundless depth
might tempt
The curious eye to look for them by day.'

But since then, light, airy, fleecy clouds have been gradually gathering. First came a cloud like that celebrated one spoken of in Scripture as seen by the prophet's servant, 'no bigger than a man's hand,' a cloud

'That looked

As though an angel, in his upward flight,
Had left his mantle floating in mid air,'

as Joanna Baillie has it. Then followed another and another, their wandering vapours, like women's filmy veils, floating glibly through the heavens, dreamily wandering through space, perfect cynosures

for the idle and tranquil. On them the eye can rest, and over them the mind can ponder without the smallest excitement; they are not such truculent clouds as Bryant describes:—

'Bright clouds,

Motionless pillars of the brazen heaven,
'Their basis on the mountains, their white tops
Shining in the far ether, fire the air
With a reflected radiance, and make turn
The gazer's eye awry.'

No; they are slight, transparent vapours, apparently of a gregarious nature, for I see them pursuing each other and joining company, when by degrees they lose their transparency, and form a lovely bank, a downy expanse of delight, a floating feather-bed poeticised. Wandering gusts of air unknown to us earth-dwellers, for deuce a one of them comes to fan my heated face, are apparently rife sky-high, and under their influence my cloud-bank takes a new form, tapering a little at the side, widening at the base, and at length settling down into a direct reproduction of the culotte of Mont Blanc. Exact! I can fancy myself once more in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Londres, at Chamouni on the balcony outside the entrance hall, and facing the little row of baths where English gentlemen boil themselves after pedestrian excursions: all the guests who are not out mountaineering are assembled, telescope in hand, watching a dozen black dots dimly seen creeping up yon snowy surface. Higher and higher they go, harder and harder we look; we all nod at each other, and give interesting details of what we see, fully knowing all the time that we are impostors, and can barely define the position of the climbers. At last, bang go the guns, we all scream 'Hurrah! the summit is reached! hurrah!'—and here Nero, thinking I am going mad, bounces down upon me and rolls me over, and spoils my day dream of Chamouni for ever.

When I recover, and struggle up to a sitting position, I discover that the clouds, 'those fairy playthings of the mighty sky,' have dispersed again, and are beginning to overspread the blue in long thin flakes

with pointed, vaporous, drifting ends. There is a technical name for this appearance you may depend upon it; *cirrus*, *cirro-stratus*, *nimbus*, and *cumulus*, are words constantly in the mouths of your scientific cloud-studiers. But I, who am a gossipmer merely, and given to use very ordinary language, call this aspect 'mares'-tails,' as I have heard it called by old sailors and sportsmen. Lovely they look, more especially at this instant, when the sun is hidden behind one of the denser of their number, but still lights up the sky. This is what Wordsworth meant when he said—

'Multitudes of little floating clouds
Ere we, who saw, of change were conscious,
pierced
Through their ethereal texture, had become
Vivid as fire—clouds separately poised,
Innumerable multitude of forms
Scattered through half the circle of the sky;
And giving back, and shedding each on each,
With prodigal communion, the bright hues
Which, from the unapparent fount of glory
They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.'

These 'mares'-tails' are by no means ill-named, if one thinks of 'Tam o' Shanter's mare and her streaming appendage, or of some of the wild German pictures of the animals on which Faust and Mephistopheles visited the witches' revels. I think of this as I lie gazing upwards, and then I see different clouds gradually forming themselves into different shapes and pictures. I see a long greyhound's head clearly defined, close by a castle on a crag, a castle by the sea, such as Uhland speaks of, and then a high-shouldered man's back topped by a slouch hat, and a long straight slip like a riding-whip! All these objects, commonplace though they be, yet look lovely when pictured by the clouds. Do you remember Mr. Millais's picture of the 'Vale of Rest?' that picture so cruelly fallen foul of by the braying critics, who called the nuns hideous, and who hee-hawed in print because Rosa and Matilda of fashionable novels, or Eulalie and Frisette of the cheap French prints had not been represented as inmates of the convent, instead of those women whose conquered passions left a dead, dull trace in their worn, gaunt faces. It was evening, if you

recollect, when these women were represented at their loathsome task of grave-digging; and in the background of the picture, just above the horizon, was a dull purple cloud, thickish in the centre, and tapering off to either end, like a cigar; indeed many of the humorists who frequented the Academy that year called the picture 'The Cigar,' on that account. I had never seen such a cloud, when I first looked at the picture, but I knew the painter's singleness of purpose, and I felt convinced that he had, and that he was merely giving a transcript of his own observation, a poetical rendering of a common object actually seen. Since then I have seen such a cloud a dozen times.

We commonplace people only see commonplace objects in clouds—mares' tails, mackerel's backs, dogs' heads, castles, cigars, and such-like; but in the poet and the prose-poet (often a larger-souled fellow than the mere singer), what glorious fancies they awaken! With what airy fancy Shelley writes of 'The Cloud:'—

'I bring fresh showers for the tiny flowers
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shades for the leaves when laid
In their noon-day dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that
waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the flashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under;
And then again I dissolve in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.'

But it has been reserved for Mr. Ruskin, who is steeped to the lips in poetic feeling, and to whom has been vouchsafed such powers of expression as rarely if ever have before fallen to mortal lot, to give us the finest idealization of vapour-land, the noblest pictures in the clouds. That magnificent work, 'Modern Painters,' which, in my day, I trust to see reduced in price until it falls within the purchase-scope of thousands who would appreciate its every word, and to whom it would be the producer of feelings long hidden in their breasts, now sterile for lack of the fostering poetic

dew, is replete with allusions to such pictures. In it he speaks of 'the ghost of a cloud, which steals by yonder clump of pines; nay, which does *not* steal by them, but haunts them, wreathing yet round them, and yet—and yet slowly; now falling in a fair waved line like a woman's veil; now fading, now gone: we look away for an instant, and look back, and it is again there. What has it to do with that clump of pines that it broods by them, and weaves itself among their branches, to and fro? Has it hidden a cloudy treasure among the moss at their roots, which it watches thus? Or has some strong enchanter charmed it into fond returning, or bound it fast within those bars of boughs? And yonder filmy crescent, bent like an archer's bow above the summit, the highest of all the hill,—that white arch which never forms but over the supreme crest, how is it stayed there, repelled apparently from the horizon, nowhere touching it; the clear sky seen between it and the mountain edge, yet never leaving it—"poised as a white bird hovers over its nest?"'

Soft and sweet, full of airy folly and fecund fancy are these words; but when next he is in cloud-land, it is in a different strain. Then he speaks of

'War-clouds that gather on the horizon, dragon-crested, tongued with fire; how is their barbed strength bridled? What bits are these they are champing with their vaporous lips, flinging off flakes of black foam? Leagued leviathans of the sea of heaven, out of their nostrils goeth smoke, and their eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. The sword of him that layeth at them cannot hold the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. Where ride the captains of their armies? Where are set the measures of their march? Fierce murmurers, answering each other from morning until evening—what rebuke is his which has awed them into peace? What hand has reined them back by the way by which they came?'

I have known many men who, while lacking the eloquence, undoubtedly possessed more than the assurance of Mr. Ruskin, who will tell of strange prognostications of coming events, or reproductions of past events in their lives, which

they have seen depicted either in the fire or in the clouds. To me, commonplace, no such indulgence has been extended; but even now as I lie, I remember one story of the kind which I nobly discredited, but which the heroine always averred had happened. Maud Forrest was the heroine, and 'though I say it who should not,' as people remark, she being my cousin, you would not find a lovelier girl in the county of Middlesex, with the bordering miles of Kent, Bucks, and Herts given in. Of a very queenly, stately beauty, very tall, and grand, and majestic, and sweeping, and all that kind of thing, she had been the beauty of her set for two years, and in her season refused as many offers as a half-bred hunter does fences in his first season, and nobody knew how she came to accept Charley Forrest, except he and herself; and she knew that though not particularly handsome, nor specially brilliant, he was thoroughly kindhearted, honourable, liberal, and madly attached to her. Charley was one of the junior partners in the house of Howell, Ewe, Havitt, and Co., who have been bankers in Lombard Street any time these two hundred years, and he lived in capital style, on the Thames, near Cookham, seldom going up to town more than three times a week, save in the season, when he had a house in Curzon Street, and enjoying his life generally. They had been married just two years, they had one little boy about ten months old, and were just settling down into thorough domestic bliss after the first fever of matrimony, when a storm occurred which very nearly wrecked the good ship Domestic Felicity, and sent all hands to the bottom.

Thus it happened. One morning at breakfast Maud saw Charley's face a little clouded as he glanced over a letter just arrived. It was from his cousin, Bob Vance, who was just married, and who volunteered a visit to Deepholme, Charley's place. Bob Vance had been in the Indian army before he inherited his uncle's fortune, and benefited the Haymarket and the casinos with his presence and his

money, and still retained much of the Indian *militaire*—notably a very imperious bearing, and certain free manners of the camp. While Charley was engaged to Maud, Bob Vance had favoured them with a good deal of his society, and his attentions to Maud had been so marked as to cause that young lady to treat him with the most frigid *hauteur*, which he resented, and thus a tacit misunderstanding was established between them. Charley knew nothing of all this: fully certain of Maud's love for him, he merely thought that his wife had some prejudice against his cousin; but that was sufficient to make him knit his brows when he read of the proposed visit. He had never seen Mrs. Vance, but had heard that she had been the belle of a county, and that Bob, who first met her at a race ball, had carried her off from a posse of contending rivals. To Charley's surprise Maud did not evince any displeasure at his announcement; she thought that Captain Vance's marriage would have entirely set at rest any annoyance which she might have experienced from his attentions, and she was anxious for the cousins to be on friendly terms. So the invitation was duly despatched, and at the end of the week the Vances arrived.

Rumour had not lied in calling Laura Vance a beauty. She was of middle height, but small-limbed, lithe, and graceful. Her hands and feet were noticeably small and well-shaped, and she had a peculiar, swimming manner of progress which was very pleasant to behold. She had a power of intensifying looks, touches, and speeches in a way dangerous to the peace of mind of the person operated on; in truth, she was a thorough flirt, and she began to make play upon Charley Forrest before she had been twenty-four hours in his house. She would sit gazing intently at him over the top of her book, with one hand passing and repassing the golden arrow through her auburn hair, until Charley, good honest soul, felt quite uncomfortable; or she would pursue him to the stables, or to the kennel, 'idolizing dogs and horses,' as

she said she did, and take his arm, or lean upon his shoulder, all the time talking softly to him, and looking up into his face with her brown lustrous eyes. Bob Vance cared for none of these things; he was a changed man; the two years during which Forrest had been married had made an immense difference in Vance; free living in India had begun to show its inevitable results, and the dashing 'swell' had subsided into the querulous invalid, ever pottering with his globules and tinctures. But there was one person on whom not a gesture was lost, not a look passed unobserved, not a word fell unheeded. That person was Maud Forrest. She saw in an instant the part that the lithe little serpent was playing, and she hated her only as a jealous woman can hate. Her manner towards Mrs. Vance, which at first was specially winning, changed and settled down into scant courtesy and brief replies. Maud did not care to disguise the rage she felt at this attempted tampering with her husband, but Laura never seemed to notice it. Mrs. Forrest was still her 'sweetest Maud;' and when not hunting up Charley, she would come and throw her arms round Maud's stately neck, which never bent for the caress, and cover her cheek with kisses. To Charley, Maud had spoken sharply about the matter, though she knew him to be utterly innocent (women have such noble inconsequence of thought and action), and poor old Charley had defended himself as best he could, imploring his wife not to speak harshly to him, and praying that, above all things, there might be 'no row.'

A row there was though, a right royal row, which will be remembered by Maud to her dying day. In honour of his guests Charley had arranged a large pic-nic at Cliefden, and in the morning after breakfast they were settling on the various modes of conveyance. The most generally favourite plan seemed to be to drop quietly down in boats; but Charley had plates and pies and other *impedimenta* to take with him, and was going to drive over in his dog-cart.

'Laura, my love,' said the invalid captain, 'I think I shall go in the shallop. I can have cushions arranged at the bottom, and lie under the awning; and I shall make myself comfortable.' It is due to Captain Vance to say that he did his best under all possible circumstances. 'How do you intend to go?'

'I?' asked Laura, elevating her eyebrows with her pertest air; 'I shall go with Charley in the cart.'

Captain Vance, taking it all as a matter of course, merely said, 'Ah!' but Charley grew very red in the face, and Tom Ffoulkes, who was stopping with them, nearly burst into a guffaw. Mrs. Forrest rose from her chair, and left the room. Two minutes after her maid told Charley that her mistress wanted to speak to him.

He found his wife in her dressing-room, and was startled at her appearance. Her long hair was pushed back behind her ears, her eyes stared wildly, and her lips were rigid and compressed. When she spoke her voice sounded harsh and strained.

'Charles—that woman—she will not go with you in the dog cart!'

'Eh? Well, Maud, my pet! Heaven knows I don't want her; but I don't see how—that is, without being very rude——'

'You must tell her you won't drive her.'

'No, Maud; I can't do that.'

'Do you mean to say that you will take her?'

'Well, Maud, I scarcely see, my darling, how I could do otherwise. I——'

'Then let me tell you, Charles, that if that woman goes with you to-day, I never will speak to you again! Oh! I've watched you both, and I've seen all the goings on, ever since she's been in the house. Oh, I am so thoroughly wretched!' And she fell into a chair, and covering her face with her hands, burst into tears.

'My darling!' said Charley, approaching. But she waved him off.

'Don't speak to me! I hate you! I'll go to papa! Why did I ever marry, and leave my dear papa?'

Oh, how I hate you! I wish I were dead! I wish I were dead!' And the poor child raved and moaned.

'Maud,' said Charley, looking very grave, 'Maud, I cannot listen to this. You *know* you are unjust. I shall drive Mrs. Vance to Cliefden, and I shall hope to find you in a better frame of mind when I return.'

He had right on his side, and he felt it: he walked slowly away, and ten minutes afterwards Maud heard the sound of wheels, and, rushing to the window, saw Laura seated by Charley's side.

Then came a long, long pause, during which Maud remained in a kind of stupor of grief and rage, occasionally broken in upon by convulsive sobs. At first she scarcely realized what had just happened, but as she pondered over it her passion entirely mastered every other feeling, and at length she rose. She would write to her father, imploring him to fetch her home at once. She would never see her husband again; he had treated her in a way she could never forgive. Oh, to think of that vile creature sitting by his side! She hated him! She wished he were dead! She——. Just at that moment fell upon her ear a confused mingling of sounds, subsiding finally into the maddened gallop of a horse. She rushed to the window, and saw the bay mare which Charley always drove in his dog-cart tear rapidly by, her harness in strips about her, and a fragment of the vehicle hanging to the trace. In an instant the awful thought came upon her that her impious wish was realized, that her husband had been killed by an accident, and was dead; and she sank fainting to the floor.

When she recovered she staggered to the window for air. All was still, but the sky had become overcast, the sun had disappeared, and thick black clouds were banking up to windward. She rang the bell, and learned from her maid that the horse had stopped at the stable in the state she had seen, and that one of the grooms had instantly set off towards Cliefden to ascertain what had happened. Maud was

nearly frantic with terror. She would go herself. The maid told her there was no vehicle to convey her. Then she would go by the river; let some one get the boat ready, she could not wait. She walked out into the garden amid the drops, which were now beginning to fall heavily. Bareheaded, she advanced to the river's brink, and then there came upon her a dreadful thought. Her husband, her own cherished husband, was probably dead. Her last words with him had been words of anger. What was she to live for now? Why not die herself? She looked at the river, and her brain seemed as though bursting with the violence of her emotions. Suddenly the water sparkled with light. She looked upwards, and through a rift in the clouds the glorious sun came struggling bravely into sight, parting the murky vapours, which drew off the evil spirits at the approach of holiness and purity. Might not this be a happy omen? Might not Charley yet live? Might——. A sound, the measured thudding of

oars in rowlocks, a shout from a boat, a scream from Maud, a confused murmur, a jump to land, and Charley, uninjured, clasped his wife to his heart.

'I knew you'd be anxious, little woman,' he said, 'for the mare was sure to run home, and you would probably see her. Skittish brute! she bolted as George was tying her to a tree, and knocked the cart all to shivers against the corner of the boat-house; so I slipped into the boat and pulled down at once. You're not angry now, darling?'

'Oh, Charley, never, never again! Can you forgive me? Can you——'

But Charley stopped her mouth in a manner which, though not new, was highly satisfactory. Next day Mr. and Mrs. Vance received a letter, which they said summoned them at once to town, and departed; and Maud has never since known a day's uneasiness. But always in her heart she thinks with deep gratitude of the omen in the clouds.

Ah! no more clouds now; the sun has it all his own way, and is too much for me. I must go in.

Q.

MRS. BROWN'S EXCURSION.

BY ARTHUR SKETCHLEY.

'HOT it is, and no mistake,' says Brown to me, on last Friday evening as ever was, whilst a setting at supper with a cucumber and crab, which is not dangerous, though something took after them, though I have known spavins ensue.

Well, I says, 'Brown, it seems to me as if I never got a full breath, the heat being that heavy on my chest.'

'I tell you what would do you a world of good,' says he; 'it's a mouthful of fresh sea air.'

'Go along with your nonsense!' says I; 'fresh sea air, indeed! when every child knows as the sea is salt; and it's a deal of any sort of air I'm likely to get, stived up, as I may say, in Condick Street, Commercial Road,

as I am: p'raps you could bring me a little home from the docks?' I says, jeering like.

'I can't bring you none home from the docks,' says he; 'but I tell you what I can do—I can take you somewheres, where you'll get it strong and sweet, and plenty on it.'

'Wherever's that?' says I; 'p'raps you means emigration—a thing as I don't hold with, through poor Mrs. Edwards, as had eleven when she follored her husband to them parts, was never heard of, and is supposed by them as knowed her best to have broke her heart over there.'

'Emigration be blowed!' says Brown.

'Brown,' says I, 'keep such languidge for them as likes it; but I

don't hold with it, through being serious brought up.'

'All right,' says Brown, 'only you will be so sharp with your emigration. I only means nine hours by the seaside for three shillings, and all in one day.'

'Well, certainly, I should like to see the sea,' says I, 'for I never did but once, and that was through a glass from the North Woolwich Gardens; but it seemed very grand, and having had a aunt, as kept bathing-machines, on my mother's side, at Herne Bay, I've always had a wish.'

'Well,' says Brown, 'we can go a Sunday by the train.'

'What!' says I; 'dear me, I never knowed as they run trains on the sea.'

'Not on the sea,' says he; 'but to the sea.'

'Well,' I says, 'it don't much matter, it's pretty nigh the same,' and then we drops the subjeck.

'You must get a bit of cold victuals ready, old girl,' says Brown, as he was going off to the docks, Saturday morning.

'What for?' says I.

'Why, to eat,' says he.

'Whenever do you mean, Brown?' says I.

'Why, to-morrow, at the excursion,' says he.

'What! do you mean as your serious, Brown?' I says.

'Of course I am,' says he.

Well, mum, my heart seemed to misgive me, and I said, 'Brown, don't you think as there may be dangers?'

'Oh, bother dangers!' says he. 'I'm not going to be stifled up here. I shall go, and you can come if you like, not as I shall want company, for there'll be thousands.'

'Oh, indeed!' I says; 'well, then, it must be all right if so many's a going; the more the merrier,' though little did I think as there might be too many.

Well, I got a bit of gammon of bacon, some hard-biled eggs, half a pound o' cheese, and a twopenny cottage; for I thought as we might fall in with a friend. I says to Brown that very Saturday night, 'Whatever shall we do for beer,

through its being Sunday?' and he says—

'It's all right; we'll have a couple of bottles of stout, for fear of accident, and I shall take my pocket pistol,' says he.

'No,' says I, 'Brown, no edge tools if you please;' but he only meant the little flat bottle as acts as a precaution agin cold and cramps. Well, I packed the basket over night, and laid the fire before I got to bed—which I was late in doing, through having a many little things to see to; and when I did get to bed I couldn't rest, as Brown hadn't got no bill about the train, and wasn't sure whether it left at seven or eight, or it might be half-past seven. So, as the saying is, I was sleeping with one eye open, and was down into the kitchen four or five times to look at our clock, as won't strike. Through Brown being a heavy sleeper, with his watch under his pillow, I couldn't get a sight of it. Well, about five I dropped off that sound as Brown was obliged to shake me, and woke me up all of a fright, for I was dreaming about the sea a-coming in, for all the world like our water when the pipes burst through frost, and thought it was a drowning me; and if it hadn't been a morning dream I wouldn't have gone for the world. So I got up, all in a flurry, and I says, 'Brown,' I says, 'tea may be hopeful, but shaving water you must not look to for being in time;' though I know'd shaving in cold would put his temper out for the day. Well, it was hurry and drive all the time; and how I got dressed I don't know, for nothing would get my muslin to meet round the waist, and Brown gave it such a pull a-trying as took it clean out of the gethers; and as Mrs. Polling as lives opposite told me as it was always chilly by the seaside, I wore my black velvet mantle, and took a thick whittle as I've had by me many years, and always wore in sickness; and I must say, I'd reason to bless Mrs. Polling afore the day was out, though I thought I should have died with heat of carrying them, Brown being loaded with his great-coat and the basket. Well, we left the key of the house with Mrs. Pol-

ling overnight, and off we started with light hearts though heavy burdens, as fine a morning as ever you see; but, as I said to Brown, 'one as promised a toaster of a day.'

'All right,' says he, 'it's always cool by the sea.'

And I says, 'Of course it must be with that quantity of water always a-running.' Well, mum, we walked on very pleasant, though I did feel a little faint through having took no breakfast to speak on; and walking fast on a fasting stomach is not a thing for to suit me, and thankful I was when we got to the station just upon seven o'clock, and was much surprised to see no one about but a policeman, who says as 'the next train was a-going to France.'

So I says, 'No thank you, young man, none of your French for me. I know what they are, through my own father being near ruined by a party as was a French polisher. We want the 'scursion, nine hours by the seaside.'

'Oh!' says he, 'that don't start till nine.'

Well, I was put out, for it was so ridiculous of Brown not to have known, of course, as it was all nine hours—start at nine, stop nine, and get back at nine. Well, Brown only called me rude things when I mentioned it to him, so I set down on a bench and waited; and the place did seem lonesome and deserted, though there was confusion a going on in some other parts, as I could hear by puffing and screaming of that French train; but them foreigners is always so noisy. Well, I did take the least drop as Brown give me out of his bottle, as he called his pocket pistol, and it seemed to suit me after so much cold morning air, and I set half a-dozing, while we was waiting, and soon parties begun to come in; and there was several ladies with babies, and all on 'em much too soon; but as one lady said, 'Better a hour too soon, than a second too late;' so I says to her, 'Right you are,' as it proved to be, for when we did start, parties was left behind by the hundreds, I'm very sure. Of all the crowds as ever I was in, it was getting the tickets which Brown had gone for;

but I'd forgot to give him the money, and in getting up to him, I had all the rest of my gethers pulled out of my dress, and my shoes trod down at heel shameful. If it hadn't been for some ladies as was plentiful with their pins I couldn't have gone. Well, after a deal of bell-ringing as nearly drove me mad, and shrieks of engines as was awful, we was carried through a gateway as was too narrow for me, and wasn't I abused by parties behind through not having my ticket ready for the young man to nip! and then I was, I may say, swep along up to the carriage door, as had a step that steep, that if it hadn't been for a gentleman as prized me up, whilst Brown pulled at me from inside, I don't think as I could ever have got up. Well, at last we was off, with a scream as made me jump out of my skin, and I should have liked it very much if there hadn't been so much steam a driving into the carriage, with a nasty smell of something burning; and sparks too as must have come in by the showers, for my black velvet mantle is burnt all over in little holes like a pepper-box; and the way as we shot through archways, and drove along precipices, and went through tunnels as was pitch dark, and deadly damp, kep a giving me awful turns. I felt one of them strike to me that violent, as I was forced to ask Brown for a teaspoonful of something just to take the chill off me. Well, when we got to the open country it was beautiful, though much dried up through a hot summer; but parties as was a-talking, said it was fine harvest weather as we ought to be thankful for, and so I should have been if the dust hadn't been quite so plentiful, through me a-setting with my face to the engine. Well, at last we got there, and glad I was, for really I had been jammed up in that carriage, and I was glad to be out of it, and longing for a drop of beer to wash the dust out of my mouth; and if the two bottles hadn't bust with the heat and deluged the bacon, which wouldn't have signified, only the bread was soaked through and through

'Well, it's no use grumbling,' says Brown; 'we'll get something soon.'

So off we goes out into Brighton, and when I looks up, I says 'Brown, how low the clouds is, over there.'

'Clouds!' says he, 'that's the sea.'

Well, mum, I was took aback, for it looked for all the world as if we was going to fall into it, or it was coming in to us. I was that parched and nearly a dropping with heat; and as to drink, we could get nothing but some lemonade as was fizzy and too warm, as made me feel quite uncomfortable; and thankful I was for a little drain of something to set me to rights. Down the hills we kep a walking, and how I did wish my velvet mantle at Jericho, for I couldn't take it off through my gethers being out; in fact, my mantle was pinned to me by the ladies, to keep all tidy, and the weight of that whittle was hundreds of pounds. Thankful I was to get to a seat down by the sea-shore, though there wasn't a bit of shade nowheres, and the glare was blinding, and I didn't like to put up the umberella for fear I should draw the rain, as it will do, and likewise the lightning, for all the world like trees, which to stand under is dangerous in storms. Well, down I set, and Brown he got his pipe and walked on a bit; and I was a looking at the sea, and a wondering whatever had come to all the ships, when a party, a elderly man, as seemed to me somehow to belong to the sea, came up, and said 'it was a nice day for a sail.' I says 'Indeed; but I says 'It seems to me as there's very few ships out.'

'Oh!' says he, 'they're gone off out o' sight.'

'Oh!' I says, 'I thought through its being Sunday, as some might not have come out, as is not my own habits of doing.'

'Oh!' says he, 'no rest for them as toils on the briny.'

'Ah!' I says, 'and thankful we do ought to be to them as labours for us through them dangers, while we're safe and sound at home.'

'Yes,' he says, 'and many meets a watery end.'

'Ah! right you are,' says I, 'for my own godfather was like that, and

likewise a uncle as was a pilot, though he died in his bed through water on the chest.'

So the old gentleman, he says, 'I'm sure you're just the one for the sea, you are.'

'Well,' I says, 'if I don't go out of my depth, I shouldn't so much mind.'

'Law!' he says, 'you'd float like a bird in that little boat, she's as light as a feather, and as dry as dust.'

Well, just then Brown come up, and the old gentleman don't say no more, till Brown asks him if it ain't a blowing outside.

'Blowing!' says the old gent, 'why it's not a capful, as I was saying to this good lady, as wants to go for a sail.'

'You want a sail, Martha?' says Brown.

'Why, of course she does,' says the old party; 'every one goes on the sea as comes here, or else they might as well stop at home.'

'Right you are,' says I.

'Go if you like,' says Brown.

No sooner said than done; the old party catches up my basket, whittle, and umberella, and down we hurries to a boat in which several parties was seated, and steps into it up a plank. There was just room for Brown and me, though I was very much put out by a young fellow as said something about ballast, as made the parties laugh. Well, I must say as I didn't like the grating noise as they made in shoving us off, no more than I did being jumped agin by sailors as was pulling about ropes, and hoisting sails, as Brown called it. So I says, when it's all done, 'I do hope as this boat will stand more upright,' for it kep a leaning over in a manner as terrified me, for I was almost a touching the water.

'All right,' says Brown.

'Well,' I says, 'I hope it may prove so.'

Well, the parties was all a-talking, very pleasant, and a lady as was next me says, 'It's singular to think as there's only a plank, mum, 'twixt us and destruction.'

'Whatever do you mean?' says I.

'Why,' says she, 'one little hole

and we should be in the bottomless pit.'

'What!' says I, 'you don't mean to say as we're out of our depths?' says I.

'Law bless you!' says the lady, 'why you might sink ten thousand monuments, and they wouldn't touch the bottom.'

Well, mum, I could have sunk through the deck, I could, and I says, 'Brown, is this what you calls doing your duty, to bring me in such dangers?'

'Hold your noise,' says Brown; 'it's all right.'

'Well then,' says I, 'do tell them to keep the boat more up, I'm getting drenched,' for the water was a wobbling through a crack near where I was a-setting, and I know'd it would take every bit of colour out of my muslin. And really the sun did seem to be a-glaring at me, and I felt rather a sort of a confusion in my head, and a nasty sinking at the heart, when a young man as was a smoking, says to another as was also a sending his beastly pipe into my face—'How jolly a good swim would be!'

So says the other, 'You wouldn't like a header out of this boat?'

'Wouldn't I,' says the other: 'what will you bet me I don't have my clothes off in half a jiffy?'

'Young man,' I says, 'you only dare to, and I'll have you persecuted as sure as my name's Martha Brown,' for I was obliged to speak; through knowing as Brown wouldn't.

'Don't you hollar afore you're hurt,' says the young man. 'I didn't ask *you* to bathe, did I?'

Well, all the 'parties laughed, so that I felt, as I may say, nonplushed, and could have shed tears through vexation; but as the sun had gone in, I could look round, and I says, 'Brown, we're a good way from the shore.' But law, he only gives a grunt, and one of the sailors says, 'Yes, we've had a glorious run,' he says.

'Whenever shall we get back?' says I.

'We're going to put her about now,' says he.

And so they did; but law bless you, mum, when we turned round,

the noise of the ropes, and the flapping of the sails, and the way the boat jumped about, nearly frightened me to death, for the clouds was as black as thunder, and a great big white wave come slap all over me, and seeing it a coming, I jumped up, and Brown pulls me down sudden; and the sailors cries, 'Keep your seat!'

'I won't set here to be drenched through and through,' I says, as I felt I was being deluged.

'Do you wan't to drown'd us all?' says a lady.

'No, mum,' says I, 'not likely—life is sweet.'

Well, she'd been a leaning her head down, and when I looked at her, she was gashly pale, and just then up went the boat and down agin, quite violent, and seemed to shiver all over.

'Whatever is the boat at?' I says.

'It's only her play, a pretty dear!' says the sailor.

'Well,' I says, 'I wish she'd give over such play,' for it give me a awful turn.

I says, 'Do for evan's sake keep this boat from going on like this;' but law bless you, mum, they'd evidently lost all power over it, for when I kep a asking when we should get back, they never answered a word, and the heavings of that vessel, and the illness of them as was round me, no human tongues can tell; and in vain I tried to keep myself up with several little drops out of the bottle. My head was swimming, and so was I; for that boat was half under water, and the rain come down intorrently, that it did, with thunder and lightning ablazing all round. So I says to Brown, 'Brown,' I says, 'take me home, or throw me over, anything to get out of this. Why don't they go back?'

'How can they,' says he, 'with such a wind?'

'Why,' I says, 'we come out quick enough.'

'That's it,' says he, 'we had the wind with us then, and now it's dead agin us.'

'Well then,' I says, 'it's shameful a 'ticing people from dry land and happy homes like this, to ex-

pose them to the raging of elephants; but, law, I was that bad, that I couldn't say no more, and was nearly drove mad by them grinning monkeys, with them pipes, as was very grand at first, but soon, I'm 'appy to say, was overtook by a judgment, as I may say, as made them laugh the other side of their mouths. Well, mum, how long that storm raged I can't tell you, for I was that bad as I didn't know nothing, till I felt a tremendous bump, as I thought was a rock, which it didn't prove to be; but us a coming to earth, and I was carried out of the boat, I may say, a dripping and a swooning; and how I got to a little public-house, I don't know, where the water poured out of my shoes like cisterns, and my clothes was wrung out. My bonnet was that smashed, as wear it I couldn't, and the shiverings and the cramps as come over me, whilst they dried me at the kitchen fire, and I thought I should never look up again, and it was with the greatest difficulty, and some hot brandy and water, as I was brought at all to myself; and but for a cup of tea, and the omnibus, I never should have got to the train in time. As to the basket, mum, it was that washed through and through, that Brown wouldn't bring it from the boat; and my umberella had been carried overboard, and floated away before my eyes; and as to my wittle, it was scorched like a ironing-blanket, through the drying, and my black velvet mantle was as stiff as a board. Talk of scrouging and

heat, I never knew what it meant till I was in that train, where we was packed like herrings in a tub; for I had parties that close on me, till I couldn't move, nor hardly fetch my breath; and I do think if it hadn't been through the pins about me, making coming in contract with me unpleasant, I should have been set on by dozens. I thought we never should get to London Bridge, and when we did, it was a lovely night, so the 'busses wasn't crowded, which was lucky; for never could I have walked home, with my gown all draggling about me, and my shoes not a keeping on my feet; and thankful was I to get home, and find Mrs. Polling as had stept in friendly and lighted a bit of fire; so we had a cup of tea, and there was a bit of cold meat in the house, and I said to Brown when we was setting over it, I says, 'Brown,' I says, 'no doubt as it will do both of us good in the end;' but I says, 'It's my opinion, as a very little more of the sea than we had would a caused my death;' and as it was, mum, I've had a awful cold ever since, to say nothing of rheumatics, which they tells me can't be laid to sea-water, for it never gives you cold; it must have been the thorough draught as I felt in the train. And it's my opinion that nine hours by the sea is more than enough for any one; but however parties manages as lives there, I can't think, for I'm sure in a week I shouldn't be long for this world.



THE LAST MAN IN TOWN.

THERE is something particularly unpleasant in being 'the last' at anything. The last to enter a public conveyance; the last to arrive at a house where dinner has been kept waiting for you; the last to get into a crowded church; the last in the pit of a theatre; the last in a competitive examination; the last to pay rent; the last on the score at billiards; the last when the last train is full.

I have been all these, and am like to be them all again; but I know a deeper shade of misery still—it is to be the last man in town. Now understand me, I do not mean this to be taken literally, for reasons that are sufficiently obvious; but I mean to say that with reference to my own particular 'set,' and to that large circle of acquaintance in which I am wont to walk, I am speaking no more nor less than truth.

One by one the men whom I count my companions have disappeared, and have gone to disport themselves on the moors and streams of England, or to form members of the great army of Britons which annually invades the Continent. In companies, ranging from two to fourteen, the married among my acquaintance have fled from the metropolis. If foolish enough to seek them at their usual dwelling, I 'learn them gone and far from home.'

I rap at some well-known door, and wait five minutes for admission. At the end of that time I am made wiser by the information that the family are at Scarborough, but that Master B——, who, being about to return to Dr. Birch's care, is necessarily absent from his mamma, 'is at home if I will please to walk in.' I do not please to see Master B——, nor to walk in. I turn again into the hot street, and try my fortune elsewhere, but with no greater satisfaction.

I enter the liberty of the Temple, and find it in possession of painters and men who delight in whitewash. I dodge under one of their ladders

and escape into the next court, where I flush a listless porter, or a policeman, whose *ennui* is so deep that he is not to be roused by that which many times has moved me to intemperate wrath, viz., the passing attention of the little boys to the great knocker on the side gate.

Doubtfully I ascend the staircase of a Templar friend, and arrive at the top of his three flights of stairs, only to find a 'sported oak' and no one within it. A piece of paper fastened to the door with a broken pen, informs the reader that a clerk attends daily for a couple of hours, and that parcels are to be left at the porter's lodge. I have no desire to see N——'s clerk, nor have I any parcels to leave at the lodge. The notice has no further interest for me than that it furnishes unmistakable evidence of the absence of my friend.

At 'The Cock,' where I am wont to dine, on the smallest possible steak for the largest possible price, and where until lately the renowned 'plump waiter' was to be seen in his suit of well-worn black—there is a howling desolation. I could dine at four tables all at once.

The man who squeezes his voice into the order tube at the 'Cheshire Cheese' is sadly out of practice. There is a melancholy about these places which is positively sickening. The pint of 'cooper' with which I wash down my steak is no longer grateful; and the steak itself gives me indigestion. 'Dick's' and the 'Rainbow' are no longer pleasant places to me; they are the resort of casual visitors, whose faces I know not.

I return to the Temple and ascend to my own third pair in — Court. Here too is small comfort. As I come in I find my laundress busied with the mysteries in which she engages twice a day. I know by sure signs that she considers my presence an intrusion. I know, too, that she deems her full pay, which she draws by virtue of my being here, a poor compensation for the

loss of 'confab' she suffers, in the parliament of her peers, plus the want of that precious right to examine all my belongings, which she enjoys only in part so long as I remain.

I come in and sit down to a cup of coffee and a pipe by myself. I prolong the time usually spent over the latest news in the 'Startler,' and conclude, as I read the comments in its leaders, that the writer of them is as I am—a last man.

I finish my pipe, and make an appearance of settling to work. The well-known volumes are beside me, and on the table are the many sheets of paper containing the embryo of that great work on 'The Scintilla Juris in Contingent Remainders,' with which I purpose to astonish the profession. For once the magic of the work is vain—I have no pleasure in it. Charm Scintilla never so wisely, the ears of my ambition and my zeal are alike shut fast. It is clear there will be no addition made to that immortal work to-night. I have arrived at that point in my treatise where it behoves me to consider 'the subtle question as to the whereabouts of Scintilla under certain circumstances; to decide whether she is to be found in nubibus, in mare, or in græmio legis. Of course I have my own opinion about it, but being desirous to-day of 'informing myself more precisely as to the opinions of other 'sagas' on the subject, I ascended the steps of the library of our society for this purpose. I was stopped by a closed gate bearing an inscription to the effect that the place would be reopened in October.

Whether it was disgust at this rebuff, or whether my indisposition to apply myself welled from deeper springs, I know not; but this is certain—that to-night I turned my thoughts to other things, and took to conjecturing what my absent friends had been doing this day. I pictured in my mind the lissom Jones in Switzerland, covered with glory and perspiration, having just achieved the hitherto unaccomplished feat of getting to the top of some long-named 'Horn.'

No feeling of envy arose in my

mind as I thought of 'the dangers he had past;' no desire did I feel to emulate his noble act, or to share in his glory. An ardent lover of nature, I am content to look on her from

'The valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades and wanton winds, and gushing
brooks;'

and my highest ambition has been satisfied by an ascent of four thousand feet.

I have admired in their grandeur the giants of the Alps, and have felt them to be wonderful; but if I am put to show my love for mountains by walking up them, then I say—and I say it unblushingly—that Primrose Hill is dearer to me than all the mountains of Jura.

I passed on in thought to where E—— H——, tired of waiting for my promised company, has gone forth on his trip in North Devon.

I saw him at Barnstaple; I saw him at Bideford, crossing the many-spanned bridge which Torridge suffers to curb her. In the spirit I was with him as he stood at Bucksh Mill, and looked from the cliffs, over Morte Bay and Clovelly, and gave my earnest vote in favour of his proposal, at any cost, to get over to Lundy. We walked together through Clovelly Court, and down the stair-shaped street to the little pier-head, where we took the boat of 'The Happy Return,' and went for a bathe. We dined at the odd inn, which we entered from the roof, and walked on in the cool of the evening to pleasant Hartland Quay. We went over the abbey church and through Sir George Stucley's park, and then by the cliff road to Marsland and the church of St. Morwenna. At length we found ourselves on 'the thundering shore of Bude,' looking where the 'Bencoolen' was so frightfully wrecked last autumn; and were debating whether to go on to Tintagel Head and see King Arthur's Castle, when I was awakened to the fact that I was not at Bude Haven, where I would be, but at — Court, London, by a vigorous knocking at the door of my room.

I go out and find the postman

clamorous for twopence, the amount of postage due on a letter addressed to a friend of mine, who, having my consent to his name being painted on my door, is good enough to allow me to pay all charges on his numerous letters and parcels.

I take up my hat and walk out. There is no opera; there are few theatres open. I go along 'the motley Strand;' and far from experiencing the inclination which Charles Lamb tells us he felt, to weep for sympathy at the sight of so much life—I am in a mood to feel the full force of the aphorism that a great crowd is a great solitude. People whom I know not, nor wish to know, pass by me, and there is no tie between us save the common one of humanity. They do not even evince the interest in me which it seems the laundresses have. These have long since reckoned me up, and made wonderfully shrewd guesses at the cause of my detention. The other day I passed a knot of them in Brick Court, and heard, as I believe, reference made to myself in the speech of one, who for that very reason I would rather live unattended than engage as my servant—though it is more than probable I was not the subject of her talk: 'He can't. He ain't got the money.' This has rankled in my mind, and like Juno I hide the wound deep in my breast, against the day of my spite.

Depressed by the absence of friends; depressed by Scintilla Juris; depressed by the general depression of the few people I meet, and depressed by other matters of

which it were long to write, I return to my chamber and determine to embody my thoughts in a letter to some friend. I bethink me to whom shall I write? What will W——, who is shooting partridges by the covey, at Bury, care about a letter from me? What is it to the acrobatic Jones at Lucerne, that I feel lonesome to-night? How will jolly D——, with his equally jolly wife, resting at Broadstairs after an eight months' innings in the reporters' gallery and the courts of law, 'marvel what possessed my brain' this Saturday night, if I venture to lay my complaints before him at his next breakfast time?

He of the west country will vote me a bore if I plague him with my fancies; and my lady friends will probably fail to understand why, if I find town so lonesome, I do not quit it, as they do.

Thus I find small encouragement in the way of letter-writing; yet my thoughts are such, that I deem it 'better to relate them to a statue or picture than to suffer them to pass in smother.' The bust of the man whose wisdom suggested the last sentence is gazing at me as I write, but looks so unsympathetic, so profoundly indifferent, that I hesitate before speaking to it of these things. And therefore it is that I sit down at this advanced hour of the day, partly to relieve my mind of a burden which is halved by the mere act of writing about it; and partly that I may remind the holiday-making public of how hard and unpleasant a thing it is to be a 'last man in town.'







Drawn by Waldo Sargent.

IN MINCING LANE.

[See "The Mart."]

THE MART IN MINCING LANE.

IN the year of grace 1811, and on the 10th day of June, that narrow but important thoroughfare which leads from Fenchurch Street to Great Tower Street, and which is known far and wide as Mincing Lane, was the scene of much unwonted animation. At all the windows, and on all the house-tops, crowds of eager sight-seers had established themselves, smiling and gaily-dressed ladies being conspicuous among the number. About half way down the street, where evidently some large building was in course of erection, a band of musicians belonging to the East India Company was stationed. Very pleasant it was to see them in their gay and brilliant regimentals, a bright and picturesque group; and very pleasant was it to listen to them as they played with excellent effect all the popular airs of the day, due attention, of course, being given to 'God Save the King.' On a sudden the music ceases, and the hum of expectation is hushed throughout the street.

A procession of gentlemen, among whom are the Lord Mayor and many City magnates, comes into view. They group themselves round and about the building in course of erection, and one of their number steps forward and addresses the assembly.

It is a disastrous time. During the previous year there have been upwards of two thousand failures. Twenty-six banks have been compelled to close their doors. Even now a commercial crisis is only just passing away. Parliament has decreed a loan of 6,000,000*l.* in aid of the commercial and manufacturing interests. Wellington is in the Peninsula fighting against Soult and Massena. Napoleon is thinking over his expedition to Russia, and is as yet all unconscious that he will one day be an exile in the Mediterranean, a captive at St. Helena. He has decreed the blockade of Europe, and the blockade has been telling heavily upon our trade and our shipping. No wonder that

the speaker soon makes allusion to the French emperor and the restrictive commercial policy he is pursuing.

He regrets, he says, the ascendancy of despotic power in a neighbouring country. He feels, nevertheless, that the world will not long remain in its present state. He is sure that the wants of the people will infallibly break down the unnatural barriers mere accidental and usurped power have raised against the legitimate exchange of articles of necessity, comfort, and convenience, and that the character for integrity, the mercantile talents, and the ample wealth of the merchants of Great Britain, will ever insure to them a large proportion of such trade. The Tyrant of Europe is unceasingly casting an envious eye upon our happy island, and longs, but will long in vain, for her ships, her colonies, and her commerce. Then quitting this exciting theme, the speaker compliments the fairer portion of his hearers in language that shows he is poetic as well as patriotic.

He is cheered, he says, by the 'blaze of beauty' he sees around him, wherever he casts his eye. He glories in the honour of being a native of this

'Blest isle with beauty—with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair.'

Then a bottle of rum is handed to him, as a British colonial production, together with a bottle of wine, the produce of Portugal, 'our brave and faithful ally;' and these bottles having been broken, and their contents poured forth, sundry other proceedings take place, and the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of the new building is completed.

The edifice thus commenced was called the London Commercial Sale-Rooms, and in about two years it was finished and thrown open to the merchants and brokers of the City as a central mart in which their

colonial produce could be disposed of under more favourable circumstances than had previously prevailed. Its earliest years were passed amid stirring times. War was not over, for Waterloo had yet to be fought; and even when peace came there was the depression consequent upon war, and for a while the Mincing Lane mart fared but ill. It had been built by a joint-stock company at an expense of exactly 48,538*l.*, but so low did its fortunes fall, that at one time the 100*l.* share could be purchased for 14*l.* Since then the building has vastly grown in size and in importance; and if it is not now one of the most profitable investments in the country, certainly this is not from the small amount of business transacted within its walls.

There is not the slightest mystery about the London Commercial Sale-Rooms; the place is open to all who choose to enter; its transactions are conducted in broad daylight upon the most simple and straightforward business principles. Nevertheless, if you take up one of the curious City newspapers wherein those transactions are regularly advertised, your first impression is likely to be one of utter bewilderment. Here, for instance, is an announcement from the 'Daily Commercial List,' one of many the eye falls upon in the impression of that journal, dated Thursday, July 3, 1862:—

At No. 7, Commercial Sale Rooms.
GAMBIER . . . 1000 BALES.
 FREUDENTHEIL & FRASER,
Brokers.

What is Gambier? you ask yourself. Is it cotton, is it sugar, is it tallow, is it hides, is it cocoa-nuts, is it walking-sticks, is it old rags, is it——? In a word, *what* is it? You look again at the paper. Not the slightest additional information is vouchsafed. The editor does not put a foot-note stating how Gambier is grown or made, what it is used for, or the price it is sold at. He leaves the announcement to explain itself, much as the Editor of the 'Times' leaves those mysteries of

the second column by which we learn that Victor is to meet Amie under the Marble Arch at half-past eleven, and that S. J. C. of 37 St. P——s R——d will find tripe and onions awaiting him on Wednesday if he brings back the key of the front door to his disconsolate Emma.

You turn in despair to other announcements, but only to become more hopelessly confused than before. One firm, for instance, intimates that it is anxious to get rid of '40 bales of Bucha leaves;' and a neighbouring house offers to the commercial community '9 bags of Cape Argol.' Further on you see that '435 bundles of Piassava' are in the market; that '12 bales of Australian glue pieces' are to be knocked down without reserve; and that at one o'clock '11,267 dholls of coir' are to follow the same fate. What sort of a 'doll' can a dholl of coir be, you ask yourself in amazement, your hair beginning to turn prematurely grey.

Indeed, when you have read thus far you will most likely feel a secret misgiving that the editor of the paper resides in or near the very excellent establishment known as Bethlehem Hospital, and that his organ is specially intended for the select reading public of Hanwell, Earlswood, and Colney Hatch. It is not until you see that other and more familiar articles are advertised in the 'Daily Commercial List' that you regain confidence in that very valuable and important publication.

And then a new feeling of bewilderment takes possession of your mind. The great bulk of the commodities advertised are to be sold in such enormous quantities that you marvel how any building yet constructed by mortal hands can hold a thousandth part of them.

Thus one firm offers for sale 7,179 packages of tea; another 34,019 Cape sheep-skins, 28,374 Smyrna ditto, and 15,933 Buenos Ayres slink lamb-skins; a third 40,000 canes, 35,000 Malaccas, and 17,000 *bundles* of rattans; a fourth 100 tons of St. Domingo lignum vitæ and 1,512 Luna spars; a fifth 500 bales of rags; a sixth 1,500 boxes of Havannah

sugar; a seventh 4,000 bags of rice; an eighth 562 casks of palm-oil and 400 casks of tallow; while one house has on its hands 50 tons of ivory, 3 tons of sea-horse teeth, and an elephant's skull and tusks.* Prince Sczhomonotolsky's winter palace, which it took a fleet horseman seven days and nights to gallop round, formed, no doubt, rather an extensive range of buildings, but it must have been a mere porter's lodge compared with an establishment capable of holding such enormous stores as these.

It is not until you have visited the London Commercial Sale-Rooms, and inspected the establishment with your own eyes, that the many erroneous impressions left upon your mind by a perusal of the 'Public Ledger,' and other kindred papers, are likely to be removed. Let us away, therefore, at once to Mincing Lane.

We enter a large and important-looking edifice, the façade of which is of stone, wearing a far more cleanly aspect than stone usually wears in the city of smoke and fog. It is eleven o'clock. Business is advertised to commence at that hour, and the very moment you pass the threshold of the building you see that it has already begun; for there, just in front of you, is a semicircular counter, at which active operations are going forward. Pale ale, for instance, is in fair but not large demand; dry sherry is being asked for; limited transactions are taking place in madeira; while chops and steaks are going off steadily.

This, however, is not exactly the business you came to see; and although, when the day is more advanced, you may like to avail yourself of the refreshment-room, which the committee, by a humane forethought that cannot be too highly eulogized, have established on the premises, your present desire is to look over the building, and to see in what manner its commercial operations are conducted.

* All these articles will be found advertised for sale, as already stated, in the 'Daily Commercial List' of Thursday, July 3, 1862.

You mount the staircase on your left, and reach the first floor. Passages innumerable branch out in all directions, and lead to various rooms, each of which bears a numeral upon its outer door. The place is thronged with brokers, jobbers, merchants, speculators, and clerks, who are passing in and out, like bees in and out of a hive, so that you have no difficulty in finding somebody to guide your hesitating steps to the room where the first sale is to take place.

You enter, and find yourself in a good-sized apartment, the seats of which rise amphitheatre-wise one above another, a line of school-desks in front of them. At the bottom is a rostrum elevated a few feet above the floor and provided with sitting and writing accommodation for three persons. It is at present occupied by two, the gentleman who is acting as auctioneer, and a clerk who sits by his side. In front of them on the seats already mentioned, are some seventy or eighty gentlemen, mostly young, each of whom has a catalogue before him and a pen in his hand. They are not buyers; they are merely the clerks of brokers and merchants; and they are here for the purpose of noting down the prices realized. The buyers occupy the bottom seat and a row of benches on the same level stretching under the rostrum and on both sides of it, their backs being turned towards the auctioneer.

It is a tea sale, and business has already commenced. Not an ounce of tea is, however, to be discerned, so that the auctioneer, for any material evidence we can see to the contrary, may be knocking down boxes of lucifers, bundles of bloaters, or ropes of onions. The purchasers evidently know what they are about, though, and the probability of their committing themselves to any such lame and ludicrous commercial transaction as is exemplified in the operation of buying a pig in a poke is slight indeed. For, as the intelligent reader will at once surmise, although not an ounce of tea is visible, what is now being sold has previously been inspected by all who are intent upon buying. The

tea itself is most likely in bond, but samples have been taken from it, and these samples have been examined at the office of the broker charged with the sale. It is much the same with sugar. The broker who has to sell it—and whether in buying or in selling he is generally the intermediary agent between merchant and wholesale dealer—obtains samples, spreads them out upon a counter in his office, and invites inspection there before the sale takes place. Purchasers come, receive a catalogue, go through the different lots, write against each the price they are disposed to give, and when the time arrives bid accordingly. So it is with nearly everything sold at the Mincing Lane mart. There are differences of detail, but the general system is the same, except in one or two special cases. As at the Auction Mart when an estate is sold, not so much as a pill-box full of mould is shown as a sample of the soil, so at the London Commercial Sale-Rooms not a glimpse is seen of the tierces of Cuba sugar, the packages of Assam tea, or the casks of South American tallow which come under the auctioneer's hammer. India shawls and furs, however, are subjected to a different arrangement when disposed of in Mincing Lane. The goods themselves are placed in the room under the eyes of purchasers. Sales of this kind do not occur very frequently, and generally last a good number of hours. In fact, they last so long that it is found necessary to provide refreshment for purchasers, after the manner adopted in the country when farming stock and agricultural implements are brought to the hammer. The sherry which prevails at the India shawl auctions is spoken of in terms of commendation by impartial judges. But let us return to the tea sale.

Business had commenced before we entered the room, and now it is proceeding with tranquil rapidity. There is scarcely any excitement. There are no fussy old ladies of either sex present to work themselves into a state of trembling agitation at the prospect of obtaining some ponderous four-poster at less

than a quarter of its value, or of being beaten in their bidding for a fender and fire-irons. Here offers are made in a very peaceful manner by a mere nod, wink, cough, or grunt. In some cases bids are given in utter silence and by pantomime only. It is thus at the sales of India shawls. Each purchaser has a mode of signalling his offers known only to the auctioneer. Thus one winks his left eye; another his right; a third tickles his chin; a fourth rubs his nose; a fifth blows it, and so on. I wonder whether, when bidding is ended, the auctioneer indicates the fact by standing on his head!

No, there is no excitement at this tea sale we are attending. Most of the gentlemen present would, I fancy, be grateful, however, if there were some. And this is especially the case with the elders. The young men look repelling, absorbed, stern: wearied and gloomy, as young men who have the tremendous responsibilities of one-and-twenty upon them generally look. The seniors, notwithstanding their generally decorous and, in some cases, venerable aspect, carry with them a suggestion of waggery, not to say a suspicion of friskiness. It is no novelty for them to be sitting by the hour together under the eye and the hammer of the auctioneer; and they look, accordingly, as though they would be really grateful for any little incident to vary the monotony of the proceedings. If a stray cat were to make its appearance I verily believe these elderly persons would rise to a man and hunt the wretched animal into a corner; I am not sure that if leap-frog were proposed it would be received unkindly; and I feel morally certain that if the auctioneer were to pause in the midst of his labours, and say, 'Gentlemen, this is dull work: what do you say to a comic song?' a round of applause would follow the suggestion.

As it is, a good deal of waggish chit-chat is going on; mild jokes are evidently being let off; anecdotes are privately circulating from mouth to mouth. Then there is one gentleman who enlivens the pro-

ceedings by uttering a shout at intervals, as though abruptly touched by a red-hot poker or bitten by a mad dog. It is not a very intelligible shout. It is something between an escape of steam and the compressed exclamation of an omnibus conductor who wishes to inform the public that his vehicle goes to the 'Bank;' but it is understood by the auctioneer, and excites no surprise. No surprise either is expressed when this shouting gentleman offers to toss another gentleman for the ownership of a lot about which there is some dispute; and the tossing duly takes place.

The sale meanwhile proceeds. 'Lot 37,' says the auctioneer, in a tone that shows his scorn of anything like persuasion or wheedling. 'What shall we say for Lot 37? Thirteen? Thirteen is offered. Thirteen a quarter; thirteen a half; thirteen three; fourteen. Fourteen; fourteen a quarter; fourteenpence-halfpenny; fourteen three; fifteen. Fifteen. Any advance upon fifteen?' And he asks this question very sternly, like a man who is determined to stand no nonsense. 'Going at fifteen, then. Going at fifteen. Gone.'

Down goes the hammer; the sale is booked by the clerk; it is booked by the purchasers; it is booked by the gentlemen on the upper benches. Then another lot is rapidly put up; sometimes, when there is no change of price, a dozen lots are despatched in a breath: in less than an hour about two hundred and fifty have been disposed of, each of which represents a valuable chest or half-chest of tea, and the sale is over.

If you enter the other sale-rooms—and there are no fewer than ten in all—much the same scene awaits you, whether it be tea, sugar, almonds, hides, indigo, or drugs that are being sold. The rooms themselves differ in size and in arrangement, but have the same general features—a rostrum for the auctioneer and his clerk, and seats with desks before them for purchasers. Some of these rooms hold as many as 225 persons. The total amount of accommodation that the establishment is capable of sup-

plying at one time, it will thus be seen, is very large.

As for the attendance, it of course varies according to the magnitude of the lots offered and their importance in the eyes of purchasers. Crowded rooms are by no means uncommon; and if competition is keen and speculation active, as in the recent case of jute, much excitement prevails. Ordinarily, however, the sales proceed as placidly and as rapidly as that we have just described. Owing to this circumstance more than fifty have sometimes taken place in a single day. The average number is from twenty to twenty-five.

Before the establishment of the London Commercial Sale-Rooms the brokers used to sell in their own offices; and instead of having one common rendezvous, they were compelled to go from coffee-house to coffee-house—from the Jerusalem to Garraway's, from Garraway's to the Jamaica, and finally to the Royal Exchange, to talk about the business transacted during the day. Now they can talk in the place where business is conducted, can read the papers in a spacious subscription-room provided there for their special use, can even lunch or dine under the same roof if they are so inclined. The saving in time must be enormous; and 'the times is money,' if I may re-quote the elegant and idiomatic English quotation of a contemporary French journalist.

It is very difficult to estimate the total amount of real business transacted at the London Commercial Sale-Rooms in the course of the year. It frequently happens, when speculation is active, that the same parcel of goods passes through several hands before reaching the wholesale dealer. Even when this is not the case no general register exists by which the product of the sales can be ascertained. The figures subjoined, which have been supplied to the present writer, and which refer only to the principal articles of colonial produce sold at the Mincing Lane mart, must therefore be taken with some reserve, although they have not been put

forth without due consideration. They refer to the year 1861, and are as follows:—

	£
Sugar . . . about	9,000,000
Coffee	3,000,000
Tea	9,000,000
Rice	800,000
Indigo	3,000,000
Saltpetre and Nitrate of Soda	700,000
Ivory	500,000
Cochineal	500,000
Total	£26,500,000

This is merely an estimate, but it is an estimate which excludes a large number of articles that are sold in Mincing Lane; and if it should err even to the extent of a few millions, it nevertheless indicates an amount of commercial business transacted in a single establishment that may well be called enormous. In 1811 our total imports of all kinds were only 26,510,186*l*. What a stride commerce must have made in fifty years!
E. C.

FAGS AND FAGGING.

THERE is a humorous and entertaining letter in the 'Spectator' (No. 597) on the subject of dreams, in which the writer, after alluding to the disappointment experienced by 'delicious dreamers' on awaking from the possession of their imaginary estates—thrones or titles—their successes in love or war—goes on to say that many an honest gentleman has been saved a deal of mental anguish in his sleep by the loud 'Good-morrow!' of a watchman or some of those street cries which doubtless prevailed in our thoroughfares as much in the year 1714 as at the present time. For my part, I feel grateful to a vender of water-cresses who, the other morning, yelled out the merits of that fragrant herb in such sonorous notes as just to save me from an ignominious punishment of my school days—a punishment which I will do myself the justice to say, though I have often witnessed its operation, I never in real life underwent myself.

It was the present Bishop of Bridlington who reappeared to me in my sleep as head master of Eastminster School, clad in those awful robes which revered custom and a royal charter have associated with that honourable position. There stood, I say, this great divine and haughty pedagogue in our rod-room, with the instrument of torture in his gloved hand. There

stood the 'monitor' who had conducted me to my fate; there the wretched fourth-form boy who was to 'take' me 'up' (*i. e.*, convert himself into a whipping-block for my special benefit), and there the rest of my sturdy little *confrères*, each of whom, so long as it did not happen to himself, of course looked upon a flogging as rather an agreeable diversion from the ordinary school routine. All these were in their places; everything, everybody was *en règle* except myself. How I came—I, Jack Easel, who had completed my curriculum, and grown up to man's estate—how came I, with a beard upon my chin, to be brought up for flagellation? Something was wrong somewhere—that was certain. I had neglected my exercise—I had stolen out of bounds—I had been detected in the act of smoking? but why was I responsible for these peccadilloes? Hang it! why was I at school at all? No matter—there I was, and no mistake, about to incur the full penalty of Alma Mater's discipline. The usual preliminaries were gone through. Dr. Stingo had prefaced his chastisement by a well-timed lecture, and then actually raised the rod (a long, elegant-looking bundle of birch twigs bound tightly at one end with whipcord), when suddenly there was a cry of 'Wawtare creases!'—and, thank Heaven! I awoke.

Oh! the relief to find myself in bed, with a sound skin, hundreds of miles from that hated rod-room, out of the reach of the Doctor's arm! As for the monitor, if he had entered my bed-room at that moment, I could have bolstered him with the greatest pleasure. I was free, then, after all! I had no horrid Latin theme to write; there were no 'bounds' for me, except those usual ones which the consideration of hotel bills might impose. I could really smoke as much as I liked, and defy the head master, even armed with that terrific birch. It was only a dream, then, after all! Hurray! I actually laughed a good laugh, shook up my pillow, turned round on the other side, and went to sleep again.

After all that has been said and sung in honour of youth—of that tender age when our pleasures are supposed to be simpler, our affections more disinterested than later in our lives—I much question whether most of us would care to re-pass through the scholastic phase of our existence. That epoch had its trials, its woes, its vanities, jealousies, heartburnings, and other evils, supposed by certain moralists to belong exclusively to man's estate. You may have malice and uncharitableness in the schoolroom and cricket-field as well as in the counting-house and forum. Is there any envy more sincere than that which Mr. Jones, of the fifth form, feels towards his successful rival, Smith, who carried off that prize for the best copy of elegiacs? Show me a youthful batsman complimenting the gentleman of an opposite 'eleven,' by whom he has just been 'caught out,' on his excellent 'fielding.' Such things are done at a later age, but not in the groves of Academia. Generosity is a matter of education, not a natural impulse. Looking on the question from an epicurean point of view, I consider the *delicæ* of school life somewhat overrated. Good moral discipline, I suppose, is good for us at all periods of life, but that dreadful rule-of-thumb existence—the miserable feeling that you *must* turn out of bed at six in mid-winter;

must feed on that huge joint of cow-beef at one P. M. (or dine on oyster patties at the confectioner's, round the corner, at a ruinous sacrifice of pocket-money); *must* be locked up for studies; *must* see and listen to what is utterly distasteful to you in your companions; *must* fag; *must* (I fear) lie sometimes; *must* do all this, or take the consequences,—may have a wholesome influence on your after life, but is certainly not pleasant at the time. I am speaking now of the best form of English education, that of a public school. As for private establishments—preparatory academies for young gentlemen, Minerva houses, halls, and seminaries, proprietary colleges, and so forth, I have no faith in them. *There* the biggest dunce is the greatest bully; the 'parlour boarder' (whose papa pays some forty pounds extra to allow his son 'all the luxuries of a home,' and the privilege of occasionally omitting an exercise in order to join a 'select circle') is sure to be a conceited puppy or wretched milksop. Any man who has had experience of both systems will be sure to decide in favour of a public school. There is at least a genuine manly feeling, a strong prejudice against humbug in any form, a contempt for quackery and genteel charlatanism, with a wholesome respect for British institutions, civil and religious, which is characteristic of those who have been brought up at any of our old foundations. It is true they don't all attend early chapel in later life; their political views may be modified by maturer years; but, as a rule, and in the ordinary sense of the word, they are gentlemen. If a public schoolboy grows up a Chartist, he will not (in consequence) become a snob. He may be what is called a 'free-thinker,' but at least he will have too much respect for the feelings of others to be profane. Take one little matter, which is really of more importance than it seems to be at first—the giving of prizes. Most of us, at some time in our lives, have been acquainted with a small school in a country town, or suburban gymnasium (near London they give these

establishments very grand names, sometimes). I am not going to quarrel with the quantity or quality of the instruction afforded there. If Mr. and Mrs. Brown really believe that their boys are going to claim anything but a very superficial acquaintance with the sciences—chemistry, botany, geology, &c., to wit—in addition to traversing the whole range of classic literature; to say nought of calisthenics (calculated, as a celebrated pedagogue in the West of England once set forth in his advertisement, to brace the mental faculties and *enervate* the body), moral philosophy, and landscape painting,—if fond parents, I say, will be so foolish as to believe that all this can be taught in some three years at Clapham or Camberwell, be it so; but what I do protest against is, the ridiculous sham and incalculable injury which is done to the boys themselves by giving prizes of books, &c., for *proficiency* in this or that, regularly every half year. Proficiency indeed! Why, every one of them gets a similar testimonial for something or other: a seven-and-six-penny abridgment of Johnson's Dictionary for proficiency in writing, or volume of Byron's poems for not being late at church! No, if prizes must be given, let them indicate some genuine success, some real superiority of intellect or application.

If fagging must exist, let it be part of an organized system, and let the relation between the fags and masters depend on the respective position held in the school rank; not lie at the mercy of every tall dunce who, because he can hit out harder than his comrades, sends off smaller boys of less muscle, but more brains, to do his bidding. Some years ago there was an admirable sketch of Leech's, in 'Punch,' which represented Paterfamilias being conducted over his boy's college or boarding-house. A hulking youth, who treated his son with great deference, was represented in the discharge of certain culinary duties at the fire. 'And who is our tall friend there?' inquires papa, with great politeness.

'Oh, that,' answers Master Hopeful, *sotto voce*, 'that is my fag. He brushes my coat, makes my toast for breakfast, and runs my errands; but I give him half my grub, and *never bully him*.'

This statement, ridiculous as it may sound when uttered by a young gentleman five feet high of a school-fellow a head taller than himself, is gratifying in the evidence which it affords that brute force does not carry everything before it at a public school. Indeed, the system of fagging, if it were possible to prevent its being abused by bullies, is about the most salutary discipline which could be devised for a boy's early life. At Eton, Rugby, or Winchester, hundreds of little fellows arrive twice a year, separated for the first time from domestic influence, cut off from the cuddling and indulgence which bade fair to spoil them at home. They are from all conditions of life, from various ranks in society. The squire's son finds himself in the same 'form' with his father's tenantry; little Lord Squeemys is brought face to face with the son of a coal-merchant; the future millionaire or Member of Parliament rows in the same boat with the lad who will be entirely dependent by-and-by on his sword, his pen, or pencil for means of livelihood. No one can doubt that this shaking up of the 'upper ten thousand' with those in humbler station is productive of good to Her Majesty's subjects at large; and 'fagging' at a public school may have, in a hundred different ways, a directly beneficial effect on boys who have been petted, or flattered, or badly managed at home. The young gentleman who, from being his mamma's darling, has grown to be her greatest trouble; the milksop who is afraid to go out in a shower of rain; the timid boy who has not pluck enough to resist the assaults of his pugnacious cousin; or the little bully who is the terror of his sisters,—on all these the discipline of a fag's duty exercises a wholesome influence. When we have brushed coats, made coffee, and dusted cupboards ourselves, we shall know something of

a household servant's duty, learn to appreciate Betty's usefulness, and treat Mr. Jeames with that respect which his service, if not his plush, demands. I cannot fancy a better training for that sort of deference which is expected from a subaltern to his superior officer than that which a fag pays to a sixth-form boy. And be it observed, that *all* have to pass through the same ordeal—lords and commoners—poor men's sons, and little prodigals with their pockets full of cash: no title will exempt, no bribe buy off the greatest of us from that equal fate. Some night, when perhaps I am with Penman (who reports for a daily paper) in the Strangers' Gallery of a celebrated forum, some youthful peer walks in and takes his seat, and we smile as we see him, and remember old days. That illustrious party, maybe, has blacked our boots, or boiled our eggs, or picked up balls for us in a racket-court, not many years ago. I wonder does his lordship wot of old school-fellows behind the latticed screen? or do we, in our turn, when we enter Messrs. Melton & Tweed's establishment, forget the honest scion of that respected house who used to be called 'Snip,' in playful allusion to his uncle's profession, but who was the best oar, and the most generous of giants in the school? We all passed through that dreadful year of bondage—'fielded' at cricket for the upper forms; kept the goals at football; did cook's and housemaid's work in-doors occasionally; got up at five A.M. to call some would-be-earnest candidate for academic honours, who preferred rising at that hour to read, rather than resorting to green tea and wet towels over night. But time rolled on, and at last emancipated us. We had *our* innings, then, while others fielded. We shinned each other on the football green, while our juniors shivered in 'goals.' We had *our* toast made for us, and coffee, and other luxuries, besides enjoying the inestimable privilege of wearing a long-tailed coat—the *toga virilis* of our young ambition.

What the colonel of a regiment is

to the ensign, what the head of a great commercial house is to the youngest clerk, or my lord bishop to the village curate, so is a senior or sixth-form boy in the eyes of a junior or 'fag.' What an awful personage he seemed to be, stalking up the school steps into his place. He had an easy, swaggering sort of gait, and kept his hands deep down in his pockets—chiefly, I believe, to show that he was not obliged to carry up his own books, that duty being always performed by his faithful servitor. His white choker was tied more jauntily, his 'trencher' cocked more knowingly, than *we* dared to wear them. When he went out on Saturdays he wore the most fashionable 'cut-away' coats, the most elegant boots and gloves. As for his waistcoats (in those days an important feature of male attire), there was no end to *them*—indeed they appeared to be renewed every week with increased splendour. Then he had a cigar-case of his own, and took Hansom cabs in the most reckless manner. He was even reported to have debts in town, in addition to the ordinary school 'ticks;' and I need scarcely say how this fact raised him in our estimation.

I use the personal pronoun generically, but, of course, the Eastminster 'seniors' differed widely from each other in their private character. When I was in my junior year, Jolliffe, our captain, was as active a young fellow as ever handled bat or rowed stroke in an 'eight.' No one could beat him at rackets, and few cared to encounter his sturdy arm and stout Balmoral boot in the football green. I think I see him now rushing on to victory in a pea jacket, with the ruddy bloom of health upon his cheek, and the little fellows on his side hurrying and cheering on their champion. Once the ball was kicked away beyond goals, right out into the road, and Mr. Tomkins was sent to fetch it. Tomkins was a small boy, in his first half-year at school, and found the object of his mission being kicked about by some half-dozen street cads. To do him justice, he did his best to rescue it, but a broad-shouldered butcher rudely pushed him aside, and seized

the ball himself. 'Hallo!' cries Jolliffe, 'what's the row?' and was on the spot in an instant.

'Here, you sir! throw that over, will you?' shouts Mr. J.

'Shan't!' says the gentleman in the blouse, with a broad grin, and begins to amuse himself again.

Jolliffe vaults neatly over the palings. 'Do you want a thrashing, Mr. Butcher?' asks our hero.

'Yes, if you can give me one,' retorts the cad, putting himself in sparring attitude.

'Take *that*, then!' says our captain, administering two arguments of a very intelligible character, which laid the butcher sprawling in the kennel (I never saw a man go down so neatly). 'When you want any more, let me know,' remarks Mr. Jolliffe, coolly; and, first lifting Tomkins and the ball into the green, leaps back to join the game.

Such encounters were frequent enough in my day: whether their necessity is now obviated by the extension of polite literature among the lower classes, I cannot say, but I shall always hope that the national art, 'le boxe,' may long be cultivated by our British youth. As long as boys are boys, they will, I suppose, quarrel, and fight, and make it up again at school; but one condition should be made—their differences ought, if possible, to be settled *at once*; or, if that cannot be, and an interval elapses, during which they feel inclined to shake hands, they should be allowed to do so. The deferring a fight for four-and-twenty hours, when both the litigants have cooled down, and *then* insisting on it, as an amusement for the 'upper forms,' is encouraging a low and brutal exhibition, and is moreover often unfair to the weaker combatant, who is sure in such cases to have the right on his side, and perhaps whose indignation at the *moment* of insult might compensate for the superior 'science' of his aggressor.

Boys who have been brought up at home or at a private school, would be surprised to know in what a business-like manner we arranged these trials of skill. Papas and mammas, who have gathered their knowledge of such encounters from

Miss Edgeworth's or Mrs. Barbauld's books, might imagine that the affair consists in a sort of tussle, and that when one of the young gentlemen is thrown, the other one, *par consequence*, remains the victor. Alas! a public-school fight is a much more lengthy and formidable affair than this. Shall I recount the details of those early duels?—describe the ring, the blankets, the bottle-holders, the backers—the youthful umpire with his watch, shouting out 'Time!' at proper intervals, and Masters Smith and Brown doubling their little fists afresh, and coming up, plucky, for the fifteenth round?

You see I am afraid of alarming countless aunts and pretty sisters about their young relatives at Winchester and Harrow—so let us draw the velaria tightly over this arena, and leave the little gladiators alone with their audience.

The masters at Eastminster exercised a sound discretion in winking at the evidence of these lawless tournaments. When young Brown or Smith junior brought up his Homer next morning, with a contusion of varied tints about his eye, Mr. Preceptor only smiled, folded his gown around him, and proceeded with the usual business of parsing and construing just as if nothing had happened. At a private school there would probably have been a hubbub and inquiry—but to what end? This was a sort of breach of discipline which brought its own punishment. After a young gentleman had been thumped about the head, it would have been hard to inflict further penalty on any other portion of his frame. Our Alma Mater was too just, too sensible for that, and wisely left the taste for pugilism to cure itself.

Much has been said and written lately on the subject of bullying at public schools. The magazines have taken it up, the daily papers have taken it up. *Paterfamilias* has said his say, and twenty voices from our old Foundations have been raised to contradict him. The probability is, that there has been much exaggeration on one side and want of candour on the other. To deny the existence of an evil does not go far

to palliate it. That bullying has taken place to a great extent, does and may continue at these establishments, all who are disinterestedly familiar with their system must admit. But to form a fair judgment on the mischief, its origin and remedy, one ought to have had some personal experience of it. The practical joking which most boys love for the sake of fun is comparatively harmless, but the systematic tyranny of a vulgar bully (often taking the form of bodily injury to weaker boys) is intolerable, and should be put down at any risk.

When I first went to Eastminster I had to endure a course of each. For instance, as a freshman (æt. 13) I was doubled up and locked in my press-bed; tried by a mock court-martial on the most absurd pretence; pinned into one corner of my room by some young scapegrace (I beg his reverence's pardon: he is a doctor of divinity now), who held a red-hot poker within an inch of my face; lathered about the cheeks with a nail-brush and then shaved with a clasp knife. This was all very well, and, saving the red-hot poker business (which, though vastly funny in a pantomime, is not so pleasant in real life)—with this exception, I say, a boy might endure all, and not be much the worse for it. But when a great brute of a hobbledohoy stands over you with a stout cane, the end of which has been ingeniously made more effective by being twisted round with waxed thread, and with it proceeds to belabour your back, arms, and legs until he is breathless, or smashes a hair-brush over the palm of your hand, or makes you hang from the top of a door by the arms until you can hold on no longer, and then kicks you for falling off, or having told you to raise your hands high above your head, plunges his brutal fist as hard as he can hit into the region of your waistcoat—these are methods of torture which, I submit, are not surpassed by the knout in Russia, and perhaps by few acts of cruelty which human nature would devise in Europe. I declare that, not many years ago, these were common forms of punishment at a certain Royal Foundation, inflicted

by young men of eighteen on junior boys—that I have myself suffered them for such trivial offence as allowing a pot of milk to burn on the fire, forgetting to call a 'sixth form' at 5 A.M., dropping a letter on my way to the post, or rowing in a boat not built by the school boat-builder.

To outsiders, and those unacquainted with the regularly-organized system of fagging, the tame submission to these brutalities seems incredible. 'Good heavens!' cries Paterfamilias, who has been brought up—say at Bonn, or at a private school—'Good heavens! why did you stand it, sir? I would have levelled the villain to the earth—I would have had it out with him, or seen the reason why!' &c. &c.

'All very well, my dear Mr. P.,' I answer, 'but suppose this villain to have been some six inches taller than yourself, and proportionably more muscular—suppose that, even if this were not the case, the slightest attempt at resistance would have brought two or three stout fellows of equal rank to his aid—suppose, with their help, he continued his chastisement with redoubled vigour—in short, suppose you were half-murdered in consequence?'

'Then I would have informed the authorities at once,' cries Paterfamilias, waxing wroth at the bare notion. 'I would have gone straight to the head-master, and—' &c. &c.

Ay, there's the rub. Such a course was doubtless open to the wretched fag, but woe to him who adopted it. He might as well have ordered a cab, packed up his trunks, and driven off from the school for ever. In the first place, 'the authorities' would probably have listened coldly to such a complaint, which necessarily must bring to light a great deal which they knew and winked at before. Instead of being regarded as a claimant for justice, the boy would have been hated as a sneak. The difficulty of getting his testimony confirmed by those who were either partisans of his aggressor, or fellow-sufferers who dared not open their lips, was insurmountable. And as to returning to his ordinary school life again after this exposé—the idea suggested such a Tartarus

on earth as was too horrible to be thought of.

And this is precisely the evil which has arisen from the fagging system. It is not because the upper boys are invested with authority that bullying exists, but because that authority is not fairly and accurately defined by those whose business it should be to define it. It may be desirable, for the sake of discipline, that the younger boys should be subjected to some sort of surveillance out of school hours—should acknowledge some deputy of the masters in the cricket-field or on the river; and in this sense the monitorial system, properly worked, might be productive of good. The adoption, too, by each of the sixth form boys (and, where numbers admit of it, the next in rank) of individual fags, by whom they are respectively recognized in a sort of patron-and-client connection, might result, and sometimes has resulted, in a real benefit to the fag himself. For a kind and generous 'senior' will not only forbear to be over-exacting himself, but may be the means of defending his protégé from the bullies of his own 'form.'

The question is, how much and what sort of duty the fag is to render in this service. In former days it embraced shoe-blackening, bed-making, portage, &c. &c. Twenty years ago, the shoe-blackening was omitted at Eastminster, and the young gentlemen were permitted to appoint deputies in the shape of charwomen to wash up the cups and saucers kept for their private use. But we still brushed our 'seniors' clothes and made their coffee, toasted their bread for breakfast, and ran on their errands. I say *ran* advisedly, for an absurd rule existed in my day which compelled every fag, when engaged on these missions, to *trot* in the presence of a 'sixth form.' Sometimes we had to rise at five o'clock, A.M., to call those worthies, some of whom adopted an ingenious plan to prevent the possibility of our retiring to bed again after the discharge of that duty. 'Call me,' roared Mr. Grinder, 'at foive, half-past foive, quarter to zix, zix, quarter-past zix, half-past zix, and so on up to morning school.'

If the object of this arrangement was to preclude the possibility of Mr. Grinder's dropping off to sleep again, it signally failed, for he was always found snoring up to the last moment, with his ugly nose just peering above the counterpane, and even then would mutter out incoherent threats about throwing his bluchers at our heads if we persisted in trying to awake him.

Among other preposterous customs was the appointing one of the fags in daily rotation to be what was called 'watch.' The business of this gentleman was, *inter alia*, to remind any one who had the right to ask him, of the time of day. To the uninitiated, perhaps, the simplest means of attaining this end would seem to be that of placing a clock in each common room, which the 'seniors' might have deigned to look at, even if they were too dignified to regulate their own 'tickers.' But the bare proposition of such a change would have been looked upon as flat heresy, and put down as snobbish immediately. In this case, as in a hundred others, the old conservative spirit prevailed to retain an absurdity; so, when Mr. Jenkins of the sixth form wanted to know the hour, he shrieked out 'Clock!' at the top of his voice, and presently Mr. Tomkins, junior, or any one who happened to be in office, cries, 'Com-ing!' and (after consulting his turnip with great care, for we were obliged to be extremely accurate in our answers) pipes out, 'Twenty-three minutes and a half past one!' The best of the joke was, that as the watches became common property, and were dreadfully knocked about, the 'juniors' (who had to supply them in turn) took care that they should be of the most ordinary description, so their accuracy as chronometers may be imagined.

I have selected a few examples out of a score of time-honoured irrationalities which were identified with the duties of a fag. That those duties did more or less interfere with the ordinary routine of school work was very certain. A boy who sits down to write a theme or copy of verses, or prepare his 'Homer' for the next day, but who is liable to

be called away from his work a dozen times during the evening to make coffee, boil milk, replenish the kettles, fetch his senior's coat, slippers, washing basin, or what not, from upstairs, is not likely to turn out many words in his lexicon, or produce iambics of a very brilliant quality. Perhaps it will be urged, that he does not lose much by the interruption: that he might as well be stirring up the coffee-grounds as bothering his head about Greek particles, and that a little active service in the way of fagging may do him more good than climbing up Parnassus with a dictionary by way of alpenstock. It was, in truth, a weary ascent to all of us, that ancient hill, and I think not many cared to reach the summit. Some few toiled up the rugged slope, and sat down breathless in the zigzag path; but most played amiably round about the base, and were content to hear more fortunate travellers describe its beauties.

When Young France, fresh from the Ecole Polytechnique, asks me (and it is astonishing, by the way, what impertinent questions Young France will ask) whether I think we are justified in allowing Young England to spend some ten years in cultivating the Classics, to the exclusion of more useful studies, I am hard up for an answer. When I first went to Eastminster, mathematics and modern languages were looked upon as 'extras.' It was considered by the boys rather *infra dig.* to take lessons in arithmetic or writing. Things are altered there, as elsewhere, now; but to this day a lad who can shuffle about Horatian epithets until they fit some metre of the Latin poet, and builds up his ode with well-worn synonyms, is considered successful at a public school; and so long as the syntax is correct, and there are no false quantities in his lines, this unpoetical poet gets greater *κῶδος* than others whose qualifications are of a more practical sort.

Without digressing from my subject, however, I wish to show that, if fagging is recognized at all, due allowance should be made by the masters for any deficiency which

may be apparent in the younger boy's school work during his term of servitude, or else he should be left entirely and unconditionally free during such hours of the evening as would amply suffice for the preparation of his next day's work; and, above all, *corporal punishment* on the part of the boy should be *distinctly prohibited*. I know of no middle course to protect the fag from the wanton brutality which must otherwise assail him from certain quarters; for so surely as a public school is an epitome of the world, it will be difficult to find a sixth form in which there is not one black sheep. Once trust a vicious or hot-tempered boy with this power, and he will assuredly misuse it on the first pretext. I do not mean to say that the authorities at Eastminster ever openly and directly recognized this licence; but that is not sufficient. Wherever the slightest suspicion of it exists, measures should be taken to check it without compromise, and the first detection of an offender should be followed by his instant expulsion.

The fag should be able to look up to his 'senior' as a friend whose superior position in the school enables him also to become a protector, and to whom he can appeal in matters which do not come under the masters' notice. In return for this service, what reasonable and good-tempered boy would object to brush a coat or two, run to the college bookseller's occasionally, keep his master's 'study' tidy, or field out for him at cricket? I can well remember some of 'our fellows' for whom these little offices were willingly and cheerfully performed—generous and kind-hearted young men, whose good example might have worked wonders in our little community but for the fact that they were in a minority, and could not reform where reform was needed. But they had their credit, nevertheless, and their names are still remembered with gratitude.

A queer old privilege was conceded to the fags, of censuring or praising the 'seniors' at the end of their year of office, and just before they were leaving the school for the universities, in a sort of pasquinade or doggrel rhyme, which the authors

themselves were compelled to read aloud in the presence of those whose characters were thus discussed. This tribunal was held on a certain evening in a dark room divided by a curtain, on one side of which the seniors sat in solemn silence, awaiting the verdict of their youthful satirists, who stepped up one by one from the other side, mounted a table by way of rostrum, and holding a lighted taper in their hands, proceeded to read their verses. One condition alone was made—and that quite Parliamentary in its nature: no names were to be mentioned in these compositions. If a 'senior,' either from some personal peculiarity or other cause, was familiarly known by some *sobriquet*, he might be described by it; and, failing this distinction, the order in which the lampoons were read was sufficient to identify their object. On the other hand, it was made a point of honour among the satirised that they should make no use of their power while remaining in the school to avenge any castigation which they received in the form of epigram.

That these effusions frequently took the form of invective will scarcely be wondered at, considering the relations in which those who received and those who delivered sentence stood to each other. What mercy could the oppressor of nineteen expect from the oppressed of fifteen, when five minutes were given him to retaliate in rhyme for a whole year's list of grievances? We piped out our wrongs and reviled our tyrants in pretty plain language—consigned Jones to Tartarus, invoked the judgment of Pluto on Brown's devoted head, and told Robinson, in stanzas which contained some other powerful adjectives, that he was a horrid bully. But for our heroes—for those who had disdained to turn their power to bad account—who had used their strength to handle the bat and oar, and not to wield the cane—good, generous-hearted fellows, as much respected by the doctor as admired by the boys—for these we poured out sonnets of un-mixed praise.

As I sit writing this, years after that then eventful scene, I remember

those honest eulogies—those sturdy sentiments in feeble metre—and fancy that I have never heard more cutting censure or sincerer praise. I see the little chubby orator with his manuscript, and listen to his declamation. His eyes flash out with righteous ire or unaffected pleasure; the candle trembles in his tiny hand perhaps, but he has learnt these verses by heart long ago, and will read them stoutly. And that blushing youth down there, who hangs his head—(we are outsiders, you know, and can see his face without the taper)—is it for shame or modesty? Is he sorry for having treated little Tomkins so cruelly, or proud to hear his skill acknowledged in the cricket-ground? What will be his next triumph or debasement? Perhaps the world's verdict will reverse this or that decision—will refuse to accept our sixth-form athlete for a hero, and let that scape-grace So-and-so receive a tardy compensation for his work at last. The school criterion of early genius—of youthful morals—what is it worth in after life? Some of our dunces have already won a name—some hopeful prize-men sunken into commonplace nonentities. A few have wiped out boyish errors on the battle-field, and most have more or less belied their former tastes. As for our intimate companions—our old familiar friends in whom we trusted—can we call them friends now, when rank or fortune, or maybe poverty, has stepped between us? When I meet my Lord Stonehouse in Piccadilly, or on the Boulevards, we bow and pass on without further ado—we who used to be such chums at school—who occupied the same bed-room—who smuggled in quarts of beer together—who toasted chée—But why recall an incident which may be humiliating to the noble viscount's memory?

And then there's poor O'Brambler, the Irish painter, author, musician, wit, and spendthrift, who is always in hot water with his landlady about the rent, his bootmaker about that leetle bhill, his washerwoman about that throiffing balance—we were in the 'under fourth' form at the same time, and entered for the pair-or

race together. I cannot help it. Tim should be more economical. I am obliged to be so. It is said that where there is enough for one there is enough for two; and if I could only get Mr. Simpson, or that waiter at the 'Cock,' to look upon the matter in the same light, Tim might dine with me at either of those restaurants whenever he pleases. As it is, I am unfortunately charged double on those occasions. I know Tim is the soul of generosity himself. But when he is 'flush' I don't want his champagne breakfasts; I would much rather he repaid me the last sovereign he borrowed. I am afraid it will end by my being obliged to

cut Mr. Timothy, which would be a deplorable result. And I am forced to confess that we cannot all hope to keep up our school acquaintances. * * *

What a long dissertation I have been led into, and all in consequence of my unlucky dream. Dream indeed! What if my awaking from that state of perturbed somnolency should by this time have the effect of sending better folks quietly to sleep! I had better lay down my pen at once. Hark! there is the watercross man again—"Wawtare-creeeeeses!" I remember ordering some last night; and here comes Mrs. Kinahan with my breakfast.

JACK EASEL.



HOP-PICKING.

Being a familiar Epistle from Mr. John Burly, of the County of Sussex, Yeoman, to
Mr. Thomas Cockayne, of the City of London, Merchant.

YOU say that you're sick of town, Tom,
Of din, and bustle, and glare,
But you don't know where to run down, Tom,
For London is everywhere ;
When Scarborough's sands are dinted
With the patter of cockney feet,
And even Killarney's echoes
The slang of Cremorne repeat.

Belgravia's marched upon Brighton,
At Weymouth is Bedford Square,
And the cits in Ryde and Tenby,
Make houses and beds quite rare.
You long for a new sensation,
You pant for a novel scene,
Then hasten to my plantation
Ere it's stripped of its yellow green.

Away from the miles of houses,
From the acres of streets and shops,
Come down into sunny Sussex,
The county that's crowned with hops.
You'll feel all your spirit glowing,
Great thoughts will your soul illumine,
As you watch your Allsopp growing
And gaze on your Bass in bloom.

'Tis merry to watch the reaping
With the flash of the sickles bright,
Or the wains through the stubble creeping
'Neath the moon of an August night.
But 'tis pleasanter far to me, Tom,
Where the long green branches trail,
The fair hop-lands to see, Tom,
With their promise of good sound ale.

When the air with the scent is laden,
And the tall poles strew the ground--
To gaze on each Sussex maiden
As they cluster their bins around.
With a hand that never lingers,
With a rustic, girlish grace,
With a stain on their pretty fingers
And a smile on the sunburnt face.



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And the sturdy workmen stooping,
As they wrench from the rich deep soil
The poles with their burdens drooping,
The prize of our twelvemonths' toil.
And then when the twilight's ended,
We sit by the oast-fire's blaze,
And the old men tell us how splendid
The crops were in bygone days.

Far better than Alpine scrambles,
Or a glance at some distant land,
You'll fancy our country rambles
And the grasp of a country hand.
So don't go over the sea, Tom,
In search of health or of fun,
You'd better come down to me, Tom,
Before our hop-picking's done.

KING SMITH.

BOAT SONG FOR 1863.

TUNE—' *Row, Brothers, row.*'

WOW, ladies, wow!
The thun ith high.
Pull long, pull stwong,
Let the bweeze wush by;
Let it play in my whiskers,
And thport with my tie.

Down Wichmond wiver
I love to go.
The pwospect's so splendid;
By Jove, you know!
While the wed Gawibaldies
Ecthite one tho!

Chorus. Wow, ladies, wow!
The thun ith high;
And I'd wather thee you
At the oarth than I;
I'd wather thee you
At the oarth than I!

LOBSTER SALAD.

BY A CRUSTACEAN ARTIST.

SHOWING THAT LOBSTERS ARE ALWAYS IN SEASON, AND WHERE THEY
ARE FOUND:

WITH FULL DIRECTIONS HOW TO SELECT AND COOK,
AND PARTICULARLY HOW TO DIGEST, THEM.

CHAPTER III.

LOCATION AND HABITS.

ALTHOUGH the subject of my last chapter was but a dream, I am nevertheless gratified to ascertain that more illustrious crustacean historians—Cuvier, Latreille, Bell, and Pliny—go far to prove that, however extended my feverish imagina-

tion, I have by no means, it would appear, exaggerated, as regards the possible size and age to which the animal lobster, admirable gastronomic friend to man as he is, may arrive. I must, however, apologize to those distinguished authors, while I avail

myself of their valuable information, if memory—for I have not read them since I left school—should cause me to err as to the particular information either the one or the other may give. I take them as a body crustacean, and boldly, like the busy bee which gathers honey from each scented flower, avail myself of their brains and quote their rare researches, from which I gather the knowledge that lobsters not only live to a great age, but attain a great size, such as the old gentleman I had the pleasure of meeting in the cave when sitting on the nutmeg-graters in agony of mind; not less as regards the crustacean individuals who stood at my bedside, inasmuch as they have been known to attain the length of three, and even four feet, measuring from the tip of the claw to the extreme end of the fantail.

Permit me, ere I proceed, however, to remark that different countries produce a varied species of lobster, both as to size and gastronomic excellence; that of the Mediterranean, termed *Palestrina*, probably being the largest, yet by no means the most delicate eating. America also produces very large specimens, as does also Norway. As regards their gastronomic excellence, however, I shall treat in the next chapter. That with which I have presently to deal is the *Homarus vulgaris*, or English lobster, most unquestionably not a vulgar lobster, but, take him for all in all, perhaps 'the most refined and delicate, gastronomically speaking, as it is the handsomest, though by no means the largest, naturally speaking. Professor Bell, doubtless a good judge of a lobster salad, thus describes him as a shellfish:—

'Body thick and rounded; the cephalothorax deeper than it is broad, somewhat compressed at the sides; the surface slightly punctated; a furrow separates the gastric from the posterior regions. The rostrum projects forwards as far as the peduncle of the external antennæ; it terminates in a strong point, and has about four teeth on each side, diminishing in size backwards. There is a small tooth on each side, just behind the base of the rostrum. External antennæ with the peduncle nearly cylindrical; its base armed with a strong tooth.

Eyes globular, smaller than the peduncle. Abdomen semi-cylindrical. The segments smooth, terminating on each side in a strong flattened triangular plate. The tail broad; the external lamina strongly divided at its anterior third; the margin of its posterior portion closely dentated: two strong teeth at the common peduncle of the two outer laminae. Anterior legs very large, unequal, the larger one furnished with very strong tubercles on the prehensile edge of the fingers, which is irregular; the smaller one with the edge of the fingers straight, and having numerous small teeth; the hands with the inner margin furnished with strong white teeth; and the wrist with a few similar ones. The remaining legs filiform and weak; the second and third pairs didactyle, the fourth and fifth monodactyle.'

The general colour of this animal is a dull, pale reddish-yellow, spotted with bluish-black; the spots coalescent on the upper parts.

By all classes in this country, and by most European nations—at least when they can get them—this species is universally held as a delicious and nutritive food; and the multitudes which are annually taken and brought into our home markets, or sent to that of Paris and elsewhere, render it perhaps the most interesting and important animal in a commercial point of view, of which I shall dilate anon.

These crustacea are taken on various parts of our coast, more particularly from the rocky coasts of the west, from whence, being packed alive in seaweed, they are sent in enormous quantities to the metropolitan market, and to many of the principal cities of England. The period in which this immense crustacean gastronomic indulgence is allowed to the people of England—at least so say historians—is for the most part considered in full force from March to the end of August; a fatal error, unjust towards mankind in general, and the English stomach and palate in particular. The sooner this weak impression is got rid of the better; and I shall do my best to eradicate it by proving that it is an error. And while on the one hand I can assert that during several months of a winter I passed in the United States, almost daily I wound up my repast within the arms of a fresh lobster,

which I consider the most delicate morsel; that is to say, I swallowed the arms without the slightest ill effects to my digestive organs; and I feel convinced the same may be done at home fearlessly.

I may now be permitted to remark that during the latter part of August, and the following month, lobsters shed their coats—denude themselves, in fact, if I may so term it; but the new covering soon becomes indurated, after which they feed ravenously, and speedily, if in health, attain an aldermanic plumpness, combined with great firmness of the flesh, so that in winter they are, in fact, in as high flavour, as innocent of any unwholesome effects, and, gastronomically speaking, as excellent and nutritious eating as during any other period of the year. The nature of the lobster is domestic; he is a lover of home; he is no traveller, no sight-seer; in fact, I may say his existence is in a great measure a stationary one, for he rarely wanders fifty miles from the place of his nativity. Moreover, they are so varied in appearance that although the eye of the general consumer may neither detect nor desire to detect any difference in form or colour, yet it is so decided that a lobster-fisher or experienced salesman can readily ascertain the place from whence he came, and where his breeding-ground. This curious fact is corroborated by Mr. Couch, who states, ‘Lobsters do not stray from their haunts, and hence the discovery of a new station is a fortunate circumstance for the fisherman, and each situation is found to impress its own shade of colour upon the shell;’ for which information, confirmatory of my own extensive observations, I thank Mr. Couch, and should be happy to offer him a lobster salad.

Lobsters, as all the world maritime knows, are generally caught in pots, and boiled in pots, and frequently potted, very similar to the pots in which crabs are caught, not, however, such crabs as the Eton and Westminster boats’ crews catch when practising; but in various places these pots differ as to shape and size; while others are caught

in bag-nets filled out with iron hoops like crinolines; and lobsters have been caught with a hook and line baited with a whelk. Still crustacean historians rather imagine that the lobster clawed rather than swallowed the bait, and, being always courteous, I give way to the learned supposition, merely holding by my own theory so far as to suppose that the lobster, seeing a good mouthful, and probably being hungry, held on tight, and was bagged. Be this as it may, I by no means recommend lobster fishing as a sport as long as salmon and trout fishing are to be had, whatever I may chance to say about the eating.

There are, in fact, no end of curious details touching these amiable crustacea. It is a well-authenticated and indubitable fact that the lobster, as well as many other species of crustaceans, not only shed their claws and other limbs in case of severe injury to them, but voluntarily, on being seized by one of their limbs, the captive member is left in the possession of the captor, while the animal escapes to provide himself with another, which, if not perchance sent to Billingsgate Market unexpectedly, time permits him to do; and it is also well known to fishermen and others practically informed that they will also shed their limbs during a thunderstorm; and even the report of cannon will cause a similar effect. It is, nevertheless, a voluntary act, and in no manner injures the animal, save that he is scarcely so presentable at table.

Authorities, however, in some measure differ on this interesting subject. The gentleman to whom I have already alluded makes the following observations. Speaking of the effects of injuries to the antennæ, he observes—

‘That it is an erroneous opinion to suppose that these organs are ordinarily thrown off in consequence of violence done to them and afterwards renewed. I have not,’ he says, ‘observed this to be the fact; but subjecting the parts to blows or fracture, both in short and long-tailed crustaceans, I have found the creature suffering acutely from the injury, most so when just emerged from the water; but in no case have they

rejected the whole organ in consequence of the violence. If, however, it be violently handled, a separation takes place at the terminal joint of the peduncles in preference to any other place; and from this wound no stream of blood flows, but a fine membrane quickly forms on the surface, by which all effusion is prevented. This preservative process resembles that which takes place in case of the loss of the legs, and for the same purpose; for crabs and lobsters soon bleed to death if the hæmorrhage be not restrained. It is only the legs, including those bearing the *chela* or nippers, that are readily and willingly thrown off by the animal; and in some cases, as in *Porcellana platycheles*, this is not only done on the infliction of violence, but as if to occupy the attention of some dreaded object, while the timid creature escapes to a place of safety. The general method of defence is to seize the object with the pincers, and while these are left attached, inflicting, by their spasmodic twitchings, all the pain they are able to give, the crab, lightened of so great an incumbrance, has sought shelter in its hiding-place. It is by the short and quickened muscular action of the limb itself, and not by any effort of the body or peduncle, that this is effected; as the convulsion will continue for a considerable time after the separation, it follows that the twisting off of the claw, where the animal has seized human flesh for instance, or any other sensible object, is the direct way to increase the violence of the grasp. Any or all the legs may be thrown off on the receipt of injury, but not with equal facility in all the species; for in some, as in the common crab, if they be crushed or broken without great violence, they are sometimes retained, and the creature will in no long time bleed to death. To save the crab the fishermen proceed to twist off the limb at the proper joint, or give it a smart blow, when it is rejected; and in either case the bleeding is stopped. Fracture of the crust at the extreme points of the legs is not much regarded; for, being filled with an insensible cellular membrane, no violent action is excited in the muscular structure, and the part seems capable of some attempt at restoration, at least sufficient to render the evil endurable until the period of a general renewal of the surface.

‘After the loss of a limb, a considerable time elapses before any attempt at restoration is visible; but under some circumstances the process is much accelerated; and while it is advancing, it is commonly found that the flesh of the creature is unusually flaccid and watery. In the most common species, the first appearance of the new limb is in the middle of the scar, from whence proceeds a soft member of minute size, doubled on itself, but with all the

proper proportions, and enclosed in an exceedingly fine membrane, by which it is bound down.’

The reproduction of the lobster, enormous as it is, would be far greater were not the young destined to become, in myriads I may truly say, the prey of fish of various descriptions, as they are of man; many, I fancy, being destroyed in the fishing operations. And it gives me pleasure to dwell on their fine natural qualities — their paternal and maternal affections setting a bright example to the animal man. Indeed the attachment of these friends to gastronomy by no means ceases with the deposit of their spawn, but continues in a very pleasing and interesting manner much longer than in most animals of a far higher grade of organization. Many fishermen assert that they have frequently seen during the season the old lobsters with their young around them. Some of the young have been noticed at six inches long, the old lobster with her head peeping from under a rock, the young ones playing around her. She appeared to rattle her claws on the approach of the fishermen, when herself and young family took refuge under the rock: the rattling was, no doubt, to give the alarm. This is told by old and experienced men, without the slightest concert or question of collusion.

The Norwegian lobster is another very amiable and obliging addition to the crustacean order of gastronomy.

‘The body of this elegant species is elongated and sub-cylindrical; the cephalothorax compressed at the sides; the surface slightly pubescent: the gastric region is armed with seven lines of points, of which the outermost are not more than three or four in number; the inner pair converge towards the rostrum, and pass into a double carina which extends to its extremity. The rostrum extends beyond the peduncle of the external antennæ, and is armed on each side with three oblong teeth; it is ciliated on each side beneath. The posterior portion of the thorax has three lines of small points: a strongly-marked sulcus runs within the posterior margin. The eyes are remarkably large and reniform; the peduncles very small at their origin, becoming suddenly much larger. The peduncle of the external

antennæ is nearly as long as the rostrum: the first joint has a triangular spine at the outer side; from the anterior margin of this joint arises the broad falciform scale, which extends forwards to the extremity of the peduncle. The basal joints of the internal antennæ are very broad and laminar. The first pair of feet are very long, unequal; in some cases the right, in others the left being the larger: the arm is slender, enlarging towards its anterior extremity, carinated above and below, and armed with a few teeth: the wrist, which is short, is armed above with strong teeth, and is strongly carinated: the hand is distinctly four-sided, strongly carinated; the carinæ armed with tubercular teeth, the upper in a single, and the others in a double series; the intermediate spaces concave, and slightly pubescent: the fingers are armed with strong tubercles, particularly those of the larger claw, and the moveable one is toothed on its outer margin. The other legs are filiform, slender, and smooth; the second and third pairs being didactyle, the fourth and fifth monodactyle. The abdomen is long, each segment being beautifully sculptured; the raised portions smooth and polished, the depressions covered with a short but dense pubescence. The epimeral portion of the first abdominal segment is small and rudimentary; the second is very broad and subquadrate; the remainder are acutely triangular. The tail is very broad, and the outer lamina is slightly divided transversely at its anterior third.

The general colour of this fish is pale flesh, rather darker in parts; the pubescence light-brown. The length of the body from the tail to the tip of the claw about eight inches—that is, the *Adonises* of the class. It is generally considered a northern species, and is one of the most beautiful of the larger *Macroura*, and, as I shall hereafter show when speaking of it in a commercial point of view, is largely imported into the London market, and considered, with reason, a most delicate and high-flavoured food. Although most decidedly a northern crustacean, and taken in large numbers, it is also occasionally found on the coast of Scotland, and sold by the Edinburgh fishmongers. Specimens have also been sent from the Mediterranean and Adriatic. Yet its general limit is unquestionably northern. Others, however, assert that it is not uncommon on the coast of Berwick and the Frith of Forth, and even in Loch Fyne, which

produces such excellent herrings. So much for Scotland's claim. While Ireland asserts a right, and names the fact of its having been captured in Belfast Lough, as also near Portferry, about the entrance to Strangford Lough, and in large numbers off Dundrum, on the Down coast, whence it is brought in considerable numbers into Dublin, in which bay it is also said to breed largely.

Although the crustacean family counts by thousands from minute animalculæ to gigantic American lobsters, ranging from the simplest to the most complex forms, yet of all the varieties only a very small number are fit for human food—the lobster, crab, and oyster being by far the most distinguished. The lobster has an amazing fecundity, and yields an enormous number of eggs, each female producing from twelve to twenty thousand in a season. When the female crustaceans retire in order to undergo their exuviation they are watched by the males, and if one male be taken away, in a short time another will be found to replace it.

I do not believe there is any particular season for moulting: this varies in accordance with the temperature of the water and other influences. And thus, as I have said, there is no just grounds for believing that the lobster is not always in season.

The mode in which the female lobster lays her eggs is curious. She lodges a quantity of them under her tail, and carries them about for a considerable period—indeed, till they are so nearly hatched as only to require forty-eight hours to mature them. When the eggs are first exuded from the ovary they are very small, but before they are committed to the sand or water they increase considerably in size and become as large as good-sized shot. Although the young lobsters grow quickly, they pass through many changes before they are fit to be presented on the table of the gastronome. During the early periods of infancy and vital progress he casts his shell frequently—at least ten times a year. This wonderful provision for an increase of size has

been most minutely studied by crustacean historians, who state that the additional size gained at each period of exuviation is perfectly surprising, and it is wonderful to see the complete covering of the animal cast off like a suit of clothes, while it hides itself, naked and soft, in a convenient hole, awaiting the new coat of mail. Indeed it is difficult to believe that the great soft animal ever wore the cast-off clothes which are lying beside it, and which appear far too small even to have encased him.

Yet it is asserted that lobsters who possibly have resided in quiet and undisturbed waters do not always cast their shells—at least that for years the moulting has been rendered unnecessary from some unknown natural cause. At all events, lobsters are frequently caught, particularly in America, covered with parasites; and such are invariably considered the most favourable for gastronomy.

Professor Agassiz, of Cambridge, near Boston, one of the most distinguished natural historians in the world, mentioned to me in the course of conversation that he had seen a lobster which measured four feet from the end of the tail to the tip of the claw. It was caught in Boston Bay, and weighed 22 lbs. I asked the learned professor if the flesh of such a monster was pure and delicate, while a slight shudder came over me in recollection of my dream. I was about to sleep in Boston, and in the briny ocean which laved its shores there might be thousands as large, or larger still, waiting their time to add to men's gastronomic tastes; indeed, as I passed homewards in a city car, when crossing a bridge I beheld in large letters—'Lobsters Sold Wholesale and Retail.' I had then cast my lot unknowingly in a city where this noble crustacean was sold by the million. I scarcely slept that night. I trust the kind-hearted professor will pardon the apparent bad taste of mixing his world-wide reputation up in so 'frivolous' a question, but really I can scarcely imagine a lobster of size and weight such as I have men-

tioned being gastronomically fit for use, save for sauce, risoles, or patés, inasmuch as he must have attained the great and uneasy size from artificial nourishment.

Again, when speaking of the immense size lobsters are known to attain, I find in a most elegant and agreeable work, particularly for lovers of the aquarium, entitled 'Life Beneath the Waters,' by Arthur M. Edwards, of New York, the following remark:—

'Our common lobster, *Homarus Americanus*, can also, when young, be used as a denizen of the aquarium. This species has not, until lately, been well distinguished from the lobster of Europe. It attains a much greater size than the latter, and is, perhaps, the largest amongst the crustacea, as it sometimes attains the weight of twenty pounds; and Dr. De Ley mentions one of thirty-five pounds. They are found on rocky coasts, for instance, the Long Island, at Hurlgate, or, properly spelt, Helle Gat, in plain English "Hell Gate," so called from its being a kind of Scylla or Charybdis.'

CHAPTER IV.

ALWAYS IN SEASON.

Now let us turn for a while from dreams of feverish slumbers and facts of natural history to those of gastronomic indulgence variously afforded for the pleasures of man by the animal Lobster.

I have heard a little historiette in reference to a lady who, on entering a bookseller's shop, remarked that she had just had 'Crabbe's Tales,' and thought them excellent; whereon another lady present, hearing the observation, on the departure of the speaker with much simplicity asked the good man, with a grave face, if he could tell her how the crab's tails were cooked, as she should like much to taste them. Now had the good lady's query referred to lobster's tails her question would have been decidedly gastronomical: they are excellent, and may be treated in various appetizing and artistic culinary modes, on which I shall dwell largely in a future chapter. Meanwhile, I have said that the eating world at large are erroneously taught to believe that the lobster is only in gastronomical season

from the 1st of March to the 31st of August—in fact, that such period only is the time when the immense sacrifice to crustacean gastronomy principally takes place, by which they lose nearly six months of untold enjoyment. It is, I maintain, a grave error, and the sooner corrected the better for the interiors and palates of mankind in general, and for all connected with commerce crustacean. As I have previously observed, that although, during the latter part of August and the commencement of the following month, lobsters shed their coats, as they do I believe at other periods, the new ones nevertheless soon become indurated, after which time they feed ravenously, become plump and nutritive, and are, in fact, soon in a condition to be ravenously fed on themselves; and thus during the winter they are probably in as high flavour and as sanitary as during any other period of the year—ay, even during those periods when in most request in merry England, which meaneth on or about Epsom, Ascot, and Hampton race weeks, Thames Yacht Club matches, Richmond and Twickenham *déjeuners* and pic-nics, when the so-called *élite* of England's aristocracy—which by no means always includes a lord—gather together in the west of the great City of London to eat, drink, and be merry, regardless of indigestion and expense. Moreover, at that solemn, 'instructive,' as well as hilarious season of the year, when our illustrious hereditary senators and members of the Lower House gather together, bursting with sparkling wit, genius, and energy, to make laws and decide vital questions of state policy, the time occupied in which many of them no doubt think—and I quite agree with such—would be much more agreeably spent in devouring lobster salad.

Our excellent friends and allies across the Atlantic, who for the moment do not consider us precisely as angels, are wiser in their gastronomical generation. And although the Congress men, who eschew titles, yet are all Honourables, do not meet to enlighten the

world at the period of the year when the fresh-mown hay casts its perfume over the nation of 'almighty dollars'—that august assembly gathering together in mid-winter—yet do they eat lobsters and lobster salads and mayonnaise to an amount that would astonish our less progressive and less enlightened people at home. Lobsters, my readers, believe me, are swallowed, and swallowed with gusto, and seasonably so, by the assembled men of genius at Washington, as by the dollar-converting Croesuses of New York, diurnally from the 1st of January, commonly called New Year's day, until the 31st of December.

Admit I do, however, and admit frankly, that a May and early June lobster, on or about the time when lettuces are crisp and fresh, is most meritorious and cooling to the human interior. Moreover, when cows feed on luxurious grass, and consequently produce thick, luxurious cream, a lobster salad, or any other lobster gastronomy, may be eaten with feelings of indescribable pleasure. And I am equally aware, though I by no means admit the preference, that oil, which often takes the place of cream in winter, is unquestionably the addition *par excellence* that ought to be used in all lobster concoctions. Cream is always to be preferred, but, as we all too well know, not always to be had in purity; therefore oil is for the most part used. First-rate oil is also very difficult to obtain, consequently, however good and fresh the fish is, it is invariably destroyed, both as regards its aroma and succulence, by bad oil, at times intolerable oil, only fit for a street lamp. But were I to select that period of the year above all others for a calm and refined discussion of the culinary merits of the rosy crustacean, I should without hesitation name the end of August or first week of September at the sea side. When, where, and how to be discussed, I shall mention presently.

I have told you that almost the whole coasts of Great Britain and Ireland produce this admirable shell-fish. I shall tell you of the many

thousands which daily reach the market at Billingsgate from the coast of Scotland, *i. e.*, Orkney and the Shetlands. I shall also tell you of the thousands which arrive from Norway, as of the immense number daily consumed in the United States of America, Canada, France, and the Mediterranean; proof, if proof were required, to substantiate their inestimable merits as human food, as of their unquestionable qualities as a gastronomic indulgence; but of all the lobsters thus produced, born, boiled, fattened, and eaten, I give the preference to the *Homaris vulgaris*, or lobster of Old England; and I have tried them all under every phase of culinary art and gastronomic concoction.

The London lobster, so called, as purchased in the metropolis, varies greatly. They are seen in almost every fishmonger's shop, boiled or alive, in their natural purple colour as when taken from their native element, or in the crimson or scarlet dress produced by contact with boiling water. You see them, I say, alive, and therefore most persons never question their freshness, and fresh to a certain degree they are. You handle them, and observe their black berries, or eggs, in abundance, which, when boiled, mix so prettily and pleasingly in a lobster salad, or decorate so elegantly the back of a turbot. You feel that were the pegs which hold fast their naughty, pinching claws removed, you would be practically reminded of what I suffered in my dream. You imagine the creamy substance of their interiors, as of their luscious claws and thighs; you revel in gastronomical ideas of their nutritious tails, and almost bite your fingers in the anxious expectation of the pleasure their eating is about to afford you. I admit the fact: there are fresh and excellent lobsters to be had in London, and, no doubt, those claws unpegged would still pinch most unpleasantly; yet such lobsters, believe me, even in their admitted excellencies no more reach the high and admirable gastronomical treat which others that I shall name produce, than does a tough leg of

ill-cooked mutton compared with one well selected, long hung, and artistically roasted.

The why is simply as follows: packed in seaweed the moment these animals are taken from their native saline element, they are despatched in tens of thousands either in vessels with caves prepared for the purpose, or in baskets, to the London market; and as long travelling has enervating effects on the human form divine, so has it in a far greater degree on the lobster: they live freely amid the succulent and refreshing seaweed, and arrive at their destination alive and kicking—that is, in a lively state; consequently claw with their claws, and play with their tails, or would be enabled to claw but for the pegs, which injure and reduce them in weight, for they soften, and become fatigued, and thus lose much of their creamy delicacy; in fact they become *blasé*, as it were, and, in a measure, faded. And although here and there a robust lobster of mature age and good constitution may endure and deceive the most acute observer of their merits, they rarely long remain so, and never regain the energy and firmness of flesh which they possess when first taken from their native element. They have, alas! only to submit calmly to their fate, which means be boiled alive, sold, and eaten.

Now I must admit that I know of few ordeals more disagreeable than that of dining alone. Sooner would I undergo the detestable nuisance of dining with a millionaire, who, for the most part, believes that money makes a gentleman, and carries with it the innumerable virtues necessary to create that pleasantest of companions—save a lady—both rare. A millionaire may become so in an hour, and be beggared in another. A gentleman of high breeding by nature or birth may become a beggar, but he never loses caste. On the other hand, I would almost say that one of the greatest pleasures in life—that of enjoying an artistical repast, with genius displayed on and around the table in a limited amount of dishes

and guests—is too often converted into an unpardonable, insufferable annoyance by bad cooking; and certainly I should never have penned these chapters, large and valuable as I know the subject is to the world in every sense, were it not that that I desired, at all events, every reader of ‘London Society’ should be well instructed in the gastronomical merits of the lobster, so as to be enabled to share with me its many unquestionable excellences.

A lobster taken from the Mediterranean Sea, whose tideless waters appear to want that saline freshness necessary to bring its flesh to perfection, has always been to me ‘Hobson’s choice’—that is, I eat it when I cannot get another. But the selection of a lobster is the study of a life, which requires practice of the eye, fine discrimination, gastronomic art, and acuteness of taste. Let me, however, lead you to some spots teeming with unparalleled natural beauties in our own little island, with which I am practically acquainted, and which I love full well, where the fish may be had to perfection, with all the other enjoyments offered to an observing mind and a lover of God’s glorious works. You will there get fresh air and exercise conducive to happiness and appetite, and a good digestion, which gives health, surrounded by fine scenery and outdoor recreations, and be permitted to eat your lobster in every phase of excellency, combined with little expense; no nightmare, but calm, refreshing sleep induced by rural and intellectual pleasures. Come with me, I say—I invite you to a lobster salad—amid scenes of the fairest in all the blush of lovely autumn tints. It mattereth little whether we proceed at first to the Hampshire coast—the lobsters, as the prawns of Christ Church, are renowned. We will thence onwards to Bournemouth, and having traversed a portion of England’s coast southwards, settle down for a week at the little rural hostelry called the ‘Carey Arms,’ at Babbicombe Bay, near Torquay. There you look forth from your window on the ocean’s grand expanse, with

the lively coast of Devonia—embracing Teignmouth, Dawlish, Exmouth, with Sidmouth in the far distance—on your left, and the glorious open sea before you, in which matutinally you ensconce yourself, and, beneath, the calm, bright, rocky, and charming little bay called Babbicombe, from which you may witness, ere you breakfast, the lobster-pots taken from the briny water, and with your own hand select the crustacean animal—being careful of its claws—on whose nutritious flesh you purpose to indulge, while the fair companion of your holiday trip—for female society is always acceptable under such circumstances—in her light but elegant costume of bright summertime, wanders like a fairy into the modest hostelry garden, and with her delicate hand cuts from its stem the crisp and yellow-tinged lettuce which forms the luscious salad of the afternoon or evening repast; while each morning as you rise you hear the lowing of the cows in the neighbouring pastures, which produce the cream necessary for the perfect melange of condiments which produce the appetizing sauce of the salad itself.

In other days, that gem of our ocean, the Isle of Wight, was a spot, *par excellence*, selected for lobster indulgences; and as far as the charming little hostelries of Shanklin, Bonchurch, Ventnor (fresh-water bay) are concerned, as also a place called (formerly at least) Crab-Kington, and various other spots where, as far as natural beauties are concerned, man, in his eagerness to improve, and his eagerness for gain—which means to destroy—not having quite fulfilled his mission, there are still various charms to be met with, offering calm retreats to the sick, fresh air of the purest, and delightful summer pursuits of the pleasantest, far from the noise and excitement of the great Babylon. And it was—but, alas! no longer is—that at one and all of these lovely spots in other days shell-fish of all descriptions were to be had in abundance in all their natural excellence and perfection. But now—and I de-

plore to write it—though Devonian and crustacea stand their ground tolerably profusely—save on rare occasions where good luck or a bribe enables you to procure a lobster, or, in diplomatic language, when double its former price induces a fisherman to spare you a lobster—you would imagine that the glorious sea which laves the island had ceased to produce them. And why? No sooner does this admirable shell-fish quit its native element, or, I should probably say, its breeding-ground, than it finds its way by thousands, packed in seaweed, across the narrow channel which divides the island from Portsmouth or Southampton, thence they are sent by railway to the London and the inland markets for the benefit of the inward man of those who reside in great cities. Railways, and steamboats, and steam-power have effected all this. Do not let me be uncivil, and say confound them, for they are unquestionably agreeable time-servers; but if report speak truly, railways are about to do far more injury to the beautiful island than that of taking away all their lobsters, by tearing up the land where hitherto the myrtle and rhododendron have flourished as they flourish at few other places, and at few other seasons of the year, cutting through the lovely works of nature for the benefit or ruin of commercial speculators, who have already claimed the lobsters, ay, and the crabs and the prawns also.

Well do I recollect, in the cheerful days of my boyhood, when I was wont to rise with the sun during the joys of the holidays in brilliant summer-time, towel in hand, to rush down what is called Shanklin Chine—now the resort of half the amiable commercial gentlemen of London—to plunge into the delicious ocean on the soft sands of that charming bay, equal in purity, if not surpassing any other in the world. The refreshing matutinal bath over, ten minutes' converse with one Prouton, who still lives, but not to catch lobsters—the most moderate outlay produced, without bargaining or persuasion,

lobsters heavy and well flavoured, of female gender the best, fresh from their native waters, to be forthwith immersed in a pot of cold sea-water, and boiled. The very recollection of those lobster-breakfasts, with a sixteen-year-old appetite, has ever since caused me to love this crustacean food, and that love, engendered rather than weakened by much travel and constant contact with the most refined gastronomy, rightly appreciated, and discreetly enjoyed, instead, as some would believe, of inducing a gross propensity, has only caused me to look on gastronomical art, as connected with the lobster, as human food, and all other foods, rather as a refined and intellectual taste than otherwise, which in delicate minds only can attain to full perception. With these sentiments I feel that the benefit I am now conferring on the readers of 'London Society' is worthy of all gratitude on their part.

Alas! these lobster-feasts at Shanklin, Ventnor, and Black Gang Chine pass across the memory as pleasant dreams of the past, never to recur. Those delicious lobster salads mixed by fair hands on the greensward beneath luxuriant foliage, with distant views of the sparkling ocean, speckled over with white sails, live only as pictures of Watteau: the scenes retain their pleasant outlines on the brain as in the heart—the fact is no longer attainable.

After the lapse of some years, I was induced, during a pleasant month of early autumn, once more to visit some charming spots, so sacred in memory as the joyous scenes of my boyhood, in this lovely Isle of Wight—a visit I never can regret—never forget; but in so far to deplore the miserable changes I beheld all around and about me—painful to all lovers of nature—pitifully and inexpressibly regretful. Ventnor rivals Brighton in the number of houses, expense of living, and beats it out of the field in what may be vulgarly termed liberty of the subject—which simply means low-bred vulgarity—and the aristocracy of wealth. Thus the butcher who

revels in his gains from those he insults, scarcely deigns to cut a mutton chop for a simple lady or gentleman, or a greengrocer to sell a cabbage.

But let me pass over these puerile disagreeables and return to crustacean converse. All the lobsters caught at the places I have named are now sent to London. The morning subsequent to my arrival in Ventnor I called at a fishmonger's shop, not very splendidly appointed, and ventured very civilly to ask if he had any lobsters or crabs, mackerel or whiting, taking it for granted they were to be had as abundantly as of yore; and I had been looking forward, I confess, as I travelled westward, to a renewal of those delicious lobster-claws and thighs which, at a former period of my life, I had enjoyed in such excellence and abundance. Indeed, I had been half inclined to bring a hamper of crisp lettuces from my home garden, and a bottle of cayenne from Morell's. With some difficulty I obtained a reply, which came with half a grin at my ignorance. 'We have none at present; if you call about mid-day (I had gone forth in early freshness of morning) maybe we may have some lobsters and salmon.' This was the end of the London season. I had eaten salmon daily for a month past, and now had come to Ventnor to be offered more. 'Shall I send you a fish?' said the man. I thanked him courteously, as I imagined, declining the salmon; and in my dullness observing that twelve was a late hour for the fishermen to come in. 'Fishermen come in!' he replied; 'why, we never gets no fish of no sort here, save a few crabs or whiting pout. It all goes to Southampton and Lunnion, and returns by the train to Portsmouth, and then by coach to Ventnor. The lobsters are all bought up for the Lunnion market before they be caught; we never gets any here, save they comes from Norway.'

I turned away in sorrow and disgust.

Nevertheless, not wishing to be done out of my lobster salad, the day being charming—I wish some of the English grumblers about climate would travel as I have, and find out that it is the best in the world—I hired a carriage at an exorbitant price, lighted my Havannah, and, reclining on the cushions, drove to Shanklin—the lovely Shanklin of my boyhood's dreams—determined, if possible, to ascertain whether Prouton still lived, and if he lived, whether he caught lobsters. Arrived, I looked around me: Nature's beauties still held their sway. The little church, embosomed in trees, where, in my earliest youth, I had knelt beside a beloved parent, was happily untouched. The roses and honeysuckle still clustered on many a cottage door. But, alas! Shanklin of to-day and the Shanklin as I had known it were as much alike as St. Petersburg and Portsmouth. For an hour I rambled amid scenes once so familiar, now as it were utterly unrecognizable, ere I found the domicile wherein my summer holidays were, for three or four years, so joyfully passed—so encased was it in trim shrubberies and overgrown trees—so surrounded by cockney 'willas.' At last I made my way down the Chine, which is still a chine in natural beauty, though man has done his utmost, in his miserable vanity and desire for gain, to embellish that. And at last I found the little hostelry of other days half way down to its lonely shore; and, ah!—joy as I had known and seen in days past—rosy lobsters lay in a dish on a bench by the house. At once I seized my prey; but, alas! they were two small and miserable specimens of the crustacean tribe. On inquiring for larger ones, the reply was 'These are all we now get; the good ones are sent to London.'

(To be continued.)

SHOP.

(ILLUSTRATED BY C. H. BENNETT.)

IT may be that some future Darwin in his great work on Sociology will endeavour to indicate the origin of classes, instituting a theory of natural selection by which the various orders in the great scheme of civilization are continually developed, until the pristine 'cad,' whose latent instincts only suffice for the continuation of his daily wants, rises by not easily perceptible gradations to the summit of mundane ambition, and curls his ambrosial whiskers in the roseate atmosphere of undoubted swelldom.

It is true that there are not wanting instances of developments so rapid that the ordinary inquirer has imagined he has discovered the material process by which the changes in such individual conditions have been effected. Some bold theorists, standing, as it were, on the margin of the science, have judged, with the ancient alchemists, that the same operations which effected the transmutation of substances into gold led still further, and by a more subtle process, to the discovery, within the same elements, of the means by which the gold itself should be refined into an auriferous elixir conferring upon its fortunate possessor those charms and graces necessary to his entrance into 'life,' and enabling him to pass unchallenged the grim sentinels who guard the threshold of society.

With merely speculative opinions, however, we have nothing to do; and, indeed, in the present stage of inquiry, awaiting the Man and the Book which shall profess to clew up the scattered ravellings of observation into a less tangled skein of thought, scarcely more need be done than patiently to collect examples of such species as are known to be separate links in the great social chain, and faithfully to note their instincts, habitudes, and peculiarities. Thus contributing to the progress of truth, we may humbly regard ourselves as the apprentices who, having prepared the ingredients in the great scientific kitchen,

leave the more sublime combinations to the illustrious *chef*, who with consummate dexterity unites them into an harmonious whole. The great tradesman class of the community presents so many varieties that it is only possible to designate a few of the individuals who characterize its broad division into species, and as a general representative of that 'nation of shopkeepers' who stood, a solid rampart of flesh and blood, against Imperial despotism, and so moved its fear even more than its scorn, we accord the parochial magnate the first place in this part of national history.

In that massy, broad face and heavy jaw the First Napoleon might well (had he been acquainted with the type) have read a determination which was akin to his own, but the more doggedly inflexible, inasmuch as it set itself to the protection of the till, which would have been emptied of its last guinea rather than it should be unlocked by unauthorized hands. That is to say, by hands not authorized by Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, the British Constitution, and that combination and reflection of all these, known as the Vestry.

A representative of this class may be discovered in any quarter of London from Shoreditch to South Kensington; but whatever may be the business in which he is engaged (say the oil, tallow-chandlery, and Italian line), he is generally found in a neighbourhood where the extremes of wealth and poverty meet: at some point where squares run into back streets, or broad streets diverge to shabby and dilapidated backgrounds.

Here, or in localities inhabited only by shopkeepers, and poor but ready-money customers, he grows in substance; waiting, if need be, until his anticipated honours come upon him, and he is requested to stand for churchwarden, overseer, or chairman of the local board.

This has been his great ambition, secretly cherished since his boyhood

at the parochial school of Saint Candlewick the Less; and to the fulfilment of the duties of such a station he brings a practical common sense which may, in a measure, compensate for certain educational deficiencies, principally affecting him in his oratorical character at those meetings in which he finds it necessary to assert his independence.

He is never ashamed of his trade—not he—and not being ashamed, he is neither foolishly servile nor offensively independent to his customers. He may, in the plenitude of his means, take a modest house a little way out of town, but not till his son, if he have one, is able to mind the shop, which he will never completely forsake. His ‘public duties’ stand in the place of recreation, and to them he brings all the energy which is no longer needed to insure his success in trade. His maxims are three:—‘Honesty is the best policy;’ ‘Business is business;’ and ‘England expects every man to do his duty.’

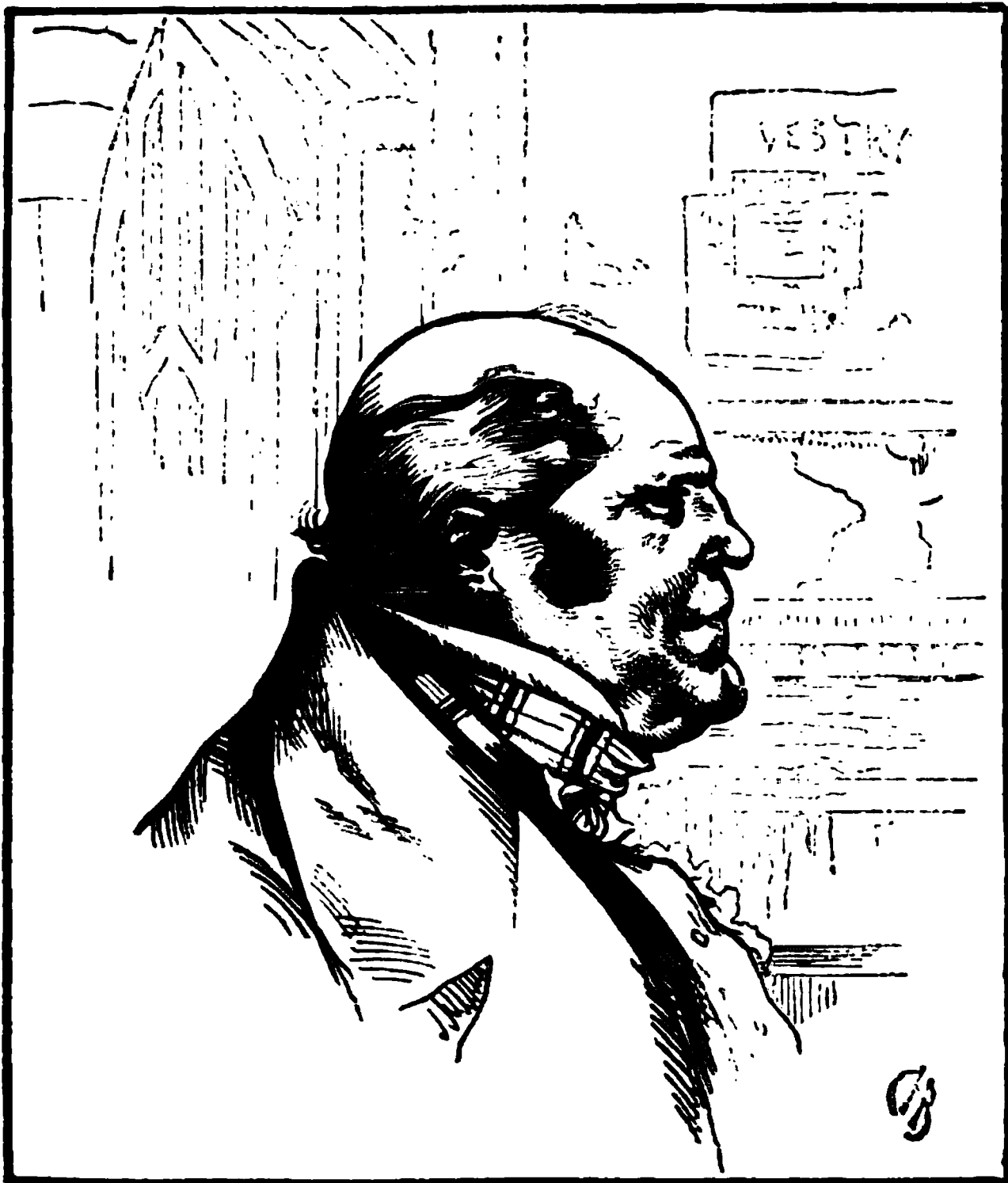
It is doubtful whether he can ever be brought to regard able-bodied paupers with much toleration. They raise the rates and occupy a space in the Union which was never intended for them; but that apparently inflexible and even forbidding sternness is an expression of countenance necessary for the production of a salutary awe in the pauper mind. The scowl relaxes not unfrequently; and many a shilling from that shining fist has helped the weak and old, who know that ‘Master looks a hard sort o’ man,’ but still that ‘his heart ain’t fur from the right place, bless yer.’ Ten to one but he sends in half a crown’s worth of hot cross-buns on a Good Friday for the workhouse children; and he has been known to vote for their being taken to see the wonders of Astley’s travelling circus when it pitched in the waste field near the Union yard.

Perhaps he may be accused of taking an inordinate pleasure in asking abstruse questions in arithmetic of the boys in the school—questions less terrible in themselves than by the portentous severity with which he regards the urchin who fails to pounce upon the answer.

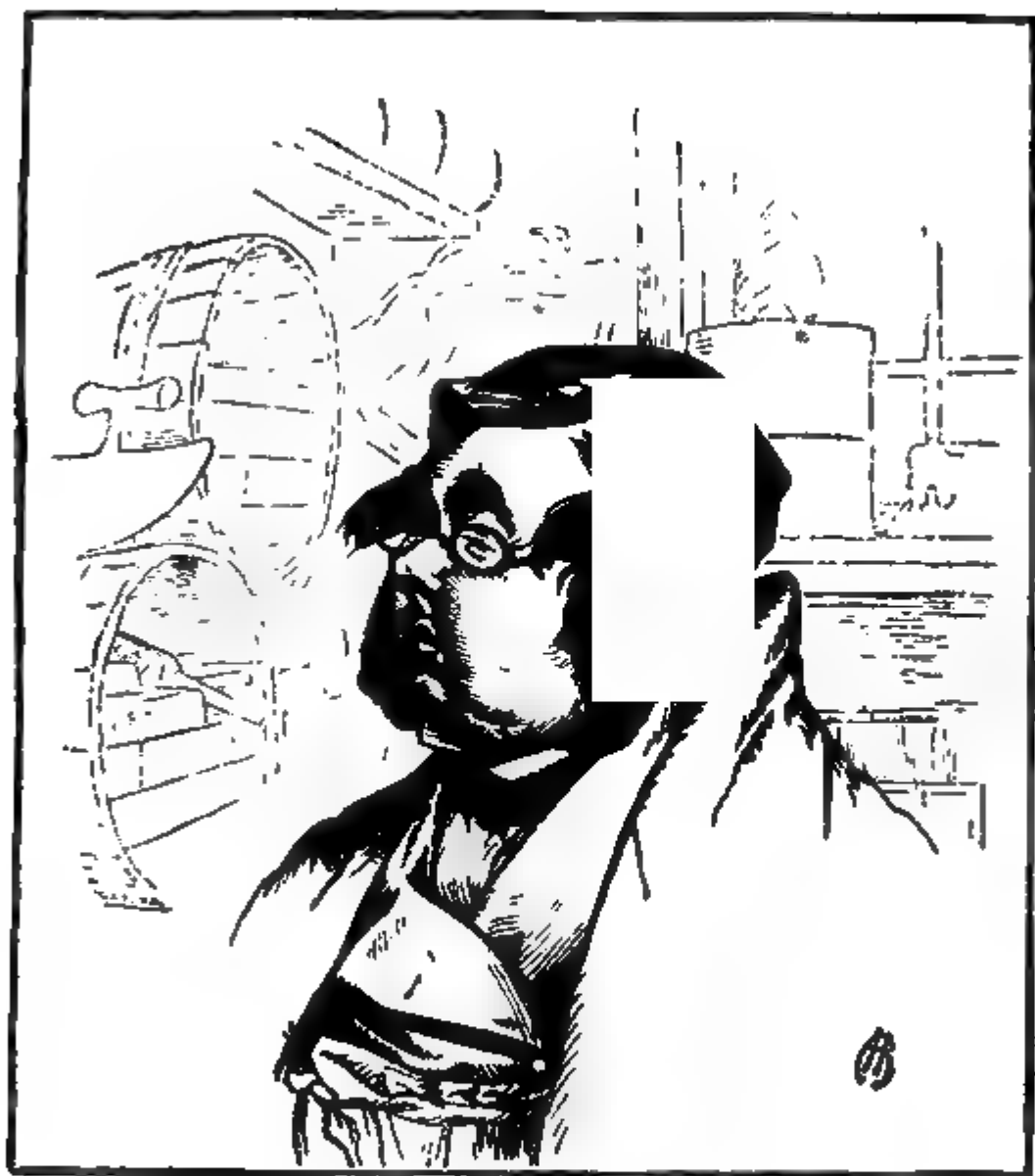
They are mostly of a commercial nature, and refer to the number of herrings to be purchased for two-pence at the rate of one and a half for three halfpence, or to eggs at mixed prices being sold at the score, to the advantage of some astute dealer; but he believes in play, too, and sees that balls and tops are among the little properties of the Blank workhouse ward.

It is ill for the contractor who supplies bad beef or flour or potatoes to the Union Board, of which he is a member. Even for a British pauper to be cheated out of his lawful meals rouses all the lion within him; and the next vestry meeting will witness an explosion which will make the ears of the fraudulent purveyor tingle again. In the same spirit he tastes the soup, punches the bread with a fat forefinger, smells the routine gruel, and is down upon every neglect of duty as an insult to ‘the Board.’ He is always re-elected—as indeed he well may be—for he works harder than any other member of the vestry; and when he at last retires into private life is presented with a piece of plate by the parishioners in grateful recognition of his public services.

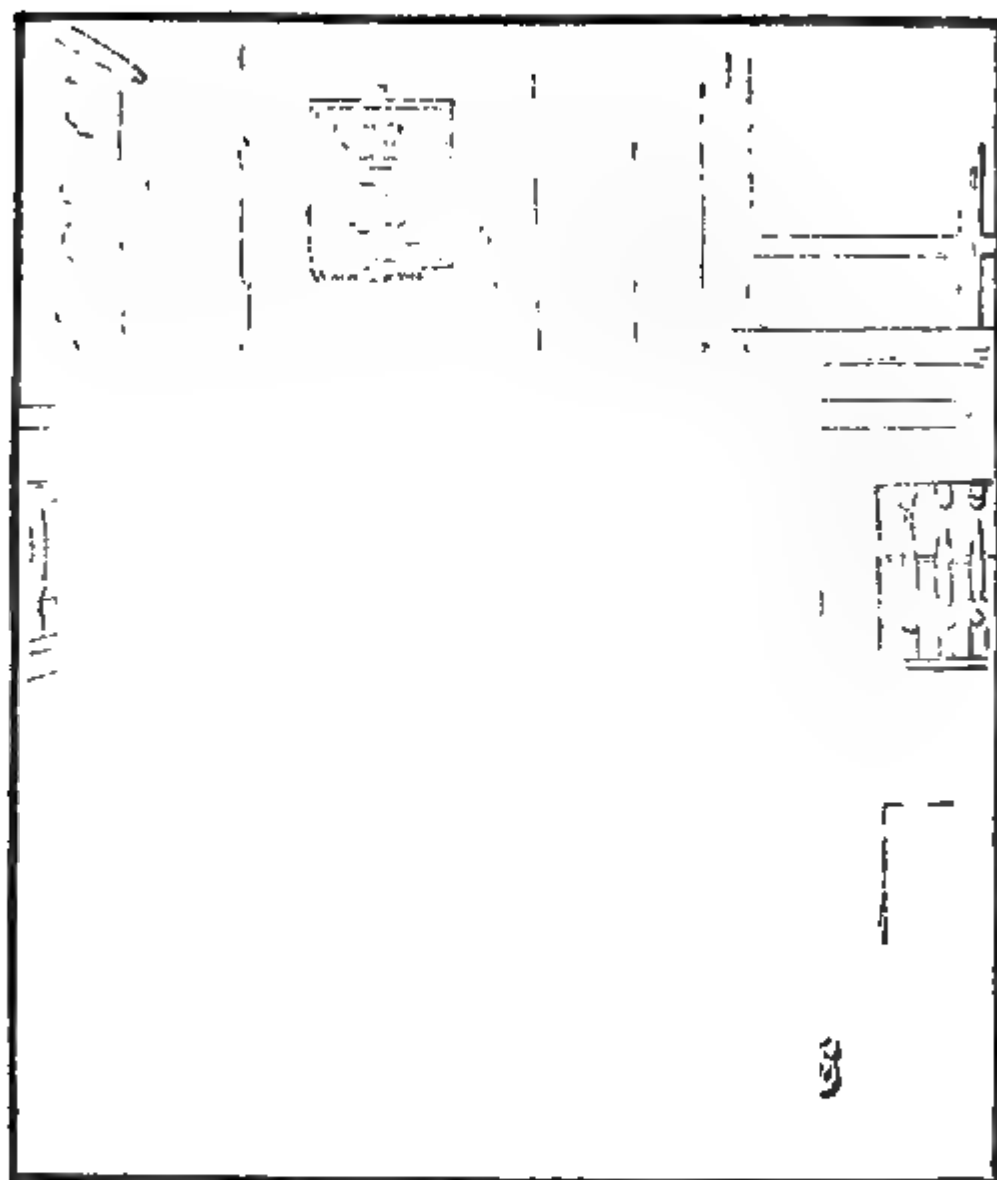
Of a very different organization is our friend the cheesemonger in the next street. No ambition beyond his butter-tubs excites his enthusiasm. He, too, is not ashamed of his trade. Why should he be? It has never entered his head to be ashamed of it. There he is, a cheesemonger with a comfortable connection,—as much as he could ever hope to aspire to. Should his children feel any hankering after gentility, he scarcely thwarts their inclinations; but it is his opinion that they ‘never can make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear,’ and he keeps out of the way of their attempts to sink the shop. Even should his eldest son go wrong, and become extravagant, he will bear with him in much-enduring patience, so that he is treated with any decent respect. But his eldest son seldom does go wrong; he more frequently sticks to the business; and when he marries, which is early in life, opens another establishment in a distant quarter of the town. He



THE CHURCHWARDEN.



THE SENTIMENTAL OVERSEASMAN.



is fat and vulgar, no doubt, this man—fat with repletion of rich, strong smells of soft butter and crumbling cheese and mellow bacon—vulgar from lack of education, from a want of that native force of character which redeems his fellow-tradesmen of the vestry from either vulgarity or meanness; and yet, strange to say, he cherishes a world of perhaps somewhat unhealthy sentiment as he stands there sleekly oleaginous. Whence came those discs of grease which have left transparent blots upon the pages of novels from the circulating library round the corner? Whose lachrymose sniff is heard in the second tier of boxes on the nights of the sensation melodrama?

The unctuous moons upon those well-worn pages are but impressions of that sentimental thumb; the sniff accompanies the sigh which heaves that labouring chest when tubs and tasters are alike forgotten. There may be something of weakness and incapacity in this development of human kindliness, but it bears fruit nevertheless, and many a larded shilling is pressed stickily into some poor wasted hand under its influence.

At least he is more estimable than the man who smirks a hypocritical denial of his trade in a supplementary counting-house railed off from the shop. You see his presentment here: his miserable ambition is to be considered 'wholesale;' and for this purpose he either furnishes his front window sparsely with large articles, or heaps it with confused masses of merchandize—pretended samples of an enormous stock below in unfathomable cellars. He is never to be seen behind the counter, and customers desiring to hold converse with him are directed to the office, where he lies in ambush waiting to be mistaken for a British merchant.

He began life probably as a juvenile clerk in some house where the wholesale had really superseded the shop trade, then rising to out-door clerk, and, so improving his knowledge and his circumstances, came to marry some relation of 'the firm,' who, sharing his own dislike of the retail, brought her portion of six or

seven hundred pounds to found an establishment of a mixed character, where customers might be served with small quantities as by favour and under protest,—the intended effect produced being an impression that they obtain better articles for their money at an emporium where the transactions were never intended to take place across a counter.

He lives in the suburbs, this smug proprietor, and drives to business in a neat chaise, which, if his affairs are prosperous, he exchanges for a brougham. Be sure that his wife and daughter are on visiting terms in society two shades above their own condition, and that they consider trade, except in a larger way, as exceedingly degrading—an opinion generally manifested by their demeanour at the shops in their own neighbourhood. The son—if there should be a son—may attend to business in an amateur way, dressed in the last tailor's fashion, and with hair scrupulously parted at the back. He is an officer in some local rifle corps, and thinks of adopting some profession, a desire often nipped in the bud by the necessity for redeeming his extravagances by an attention to the failing concern, which shares the fate of many other shams, and is gradually found out by the public.

If the ambition of the wholesale retailer stops short of a seat in Parliament he probably accepts a place in the corporation, and is known at once as a troublesome and somewhat cantankerous member of the minority in the Common Council. He it is who opposes all attempts to carry out any local improvement by accusing the sub-committees of incompetency or insinuating jobbery. Should this have the desired effect, and a fresh committee be formed, of which he is chairman, some before unknown architect or builder or surveyor is brought out as a phenomenon of genius until certain indications of his relationship to the chairman destroy the sweet illusion, and result in an examination of the accounts. Should any of the officers or servants of the Corporation come under the inspection or exhortation of this exalted shopkeeper, be sure they are worried and badgered by

his spiteful jocularities until (if they are weak or nervous) they are confused with surprise and indignation. Who so sharp upon defaulters as he? Who so persistent in his determination to keep everybody up to his own pure standard and gauge of duty? He seldom forgets the slightest symptom of disrespect in a poor man, and will meanly avenge himself at the first opportunity. Some day, perhaps, the shutters of the wholesale-retail establishment are not taken down at the usual time—no brougham drives up to the door—a legally written announcement appears wafered to the door-post, and another name in the Gazette—then the plate, furniture, carpets, pianos, cellar of wine, library of books, and kitchen utensils are divided into lots at the suburban villa—the horse and carriage are sold by private contract—the stock (a scanty one) and fixtures of the shop are knocked down to the highest bidder—and the sixteen feet of rails and wainscot panelling which form the office are carried away by two Jew dealers in a light cart.

A still lower specimen of the shop kingdom—a representative, indeed, of the most abject type of trade—is he who has by his meanness and dishonesty brought trade itself into disrepute, as being inevitably associated with degrading influences and miserable, petty theft. Short weight, false measure, constant adulteration, unscrupulous lying, are the attendants on his commercial career. His origin is lost in obscurity, and he himself scarcely refers to his early youth, except by a sanctimonious whine, in which he profanely attributes his 'humble successes' to Providence. He is generally the tenant of a new shop, never properly finished, and only miserably fitted, situated in suburban London, or in those shabby-genteel neighbourhoods inhabited by commercial clerks, small City officials, people conducting obscure agencies, or those whose occupations are mysterious addenda to legal or Stock Exchange transactions. Tolerably secure against discovery, and with no particular objection to let certain of his customers run a small account, he sells

the worst adulterations of his trade (the grocer's), and cogs his scales boldly. By some mysterious fascination he keeps his victims on his books, and his shabby, half-furnished shop survives some others of greater pretensions and display. To open this shop he has married a widow with two hundred pounds and an unhealthy child, or an advanced spinster with a talent for saving and a small annuity. He himself is as shabby as his premises, and is never completely washed. He deprecates any friendly and jocular allusion to his fraudulent practices by inquiring what is to be done in such times and when business is in such a state. If he occupies a seat in the parish church he shambles to it as though he sought its shelter under protest—as well he may—and, in short, mildly regards himself as a martyr to a state of things with which he has personally nothing whatever to do.

Whatever else he does he makes money, and eking it out by means of a building society, or a loan society, or some other means known to such as he as a safe and secret mode of operation, contrives to build on some by-spot in his own neighbourhood a few small unwholesome-looking houses, which he calls cottages, and lets out at low rents. It must be a sharp tenant who would succeed in getting behindhand for a quarter; and the houses fade and rot and almost fall before he will consent to repair them. Soon they are let out by the week, on the principle of small profits and quick returns; and the artisans who rent them repair the places themselves, or let them run to decay. From this small beginning, however, he goes on, and so far prospers that he may eventually become the landlord of a whole row of modern villas, and wait upon his tenants for their quarter's rent with a hang-dog servility which is all his own. What becomes of him at last who can tell? His end is as little known as his beginning, for he is too low for disgrace, and too obscure even for infamy. A bad type of a vile species, let us hope for his final and speedy extinction.

T. A.

LONDON SOCIETY.

NOVEMBER, 1863.

THE WORLD BEHIND THE SCENES.

WHEN our ancestors by Act of Parliament declared actors and stage players to be 'rogues and vagabonds,' it was no doubt in the idea that all such persons led an idle, dissolute, and wandering life. Idleness, however, was what was chiefly insisted upon in connection with the occupation of play-acting. The player was looked upon as a

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lazy, good-for-nothing fellow, who did not like real work, and who, consequently, turned actor, that he might indulge his indolent disposition. It was supposed, when he strutted and fretted in the high-heeled sock, or shuffled through some pantomimic comicality in the low-heeled buskin, that he was amusing himself as much as he

amused the audience. He liked the occupation because it was play, not work. This was the notion, not only of those who objected to the stage, but also of many thoughtless playgoers who never troubled themselves to reflect upon the trials and sorrows of an actor's life.

But actors are no longer rogues and vagabonds by Act of Parliament; they no longer wander about the country and play in sheds and barns; and when they die, they are no longer denied Christian burial. Still the rogue and vagabond notion largely prevails in the public mind. Very few persons who frequent the theatres have any real notion of what an actor's life really is. The stage-struck youth who invests all his spare shillings in 'half price to the pit,' draws invidious comparisons between his own occupation in the shop or counting-house and that of the favourite actor with whose powers he is so much smitten. How *he* would like to be an actor and do all those funny things in the farce! How much more pleasant than casting up columns of figures, or serving silks and calicoes! How delightful to be able to get up at what hour you like in the morning; to have no horrid office to go to; to have no master to scold or bully you; to have nothing to do all day, and then to be the admired of all admirers for a few bright hours at night!

The stage-struck youth's view of an actor's life is pretty generally shared in by playgoers of a larger growth. Paterfamilias, who has heard that Mr. Thespis Brown gets his twenty or thirty pounds a week, reflects bitterly upon the four or five hundred a year, which is all his reward for toiling from morning to night in a dingy office in the City. Mr. Thespis Brown gets three times as much merely for playing—for doing nothing! When Paterfamilias is toiling in the City, Mr. Thespis Brown is walking about enjoying himself. He has only to put forth a little exertion in the evening when the time comes for amusement and gaiety.

It is our object in this article to disabuse the minds of all thoughtless playgoers of this absurd notion;

and if such persons will only accompany us behind the scenes of an actor's daily life, we think we shall succeed in doing so.

First, then, as to the mere effort of playing, which seems so easy and so pleasant. A popular actor has often to perform in three pieces a night; or, what is equally arduous, in one long piece, which lasts the greater part of the evening. In either case he has to arrive at the theatre by half-past six. His work begins full half an hour before the rising of the curtain. One of the first unpleasant things he has to do—and particularly unpleasant at that hour of the day—is to shave himself; or, as is more frequently the case, to submit himself to be shaved by another. Now as an actor must not wear whiskers, or even a moustache, he has a great deal of cheek and chin to shave, and consequently in his case the area of torture is enlarged beyond the ordinary limits. But the disagreeable operation is necessary even if it should have already been performed at the natural shaving hour. This is an axiom of the dressing-room—'The human face will not take paint until it is shaved.' We might add another—'The human face will not take paint until it is washed.' So, to begin with, the actor has to shave and wash. Then he has to denude himself of the garments of every-day life—even to the very shirt—and indue himself in other garments, which in too many cases have been worn by others, and are, in general, hot, stuffy, and uncomfortable. This done, he has to seat himself in a chair, and have his face painted by a dresser. Now there are some things about making up the face which are the most distressing which can happen to a man who possesses any sense of dignity, or entertains any respect for his person. To be floured with a powder-puff is pleasant enough; there is nothing very objectionable in having rouge put on your cheeks with a hare's foot; you may even submit with patience to be wrinkled with Indian ink; but what do you imagine are the feelings of a man when his nose (with the view of having a piece of pink cotton wool stuck upon

It) is being daubed over with melted glue, as if it were the leg of a stool or the knob of a drawer! Imagine the process going still further, and the contents of the glue pot being smeared over your eyebrows, in order to secure the adhesion of two tufts of crape hair. Nothing but actual experience could give you any conception of the delightful sensation which ensues when the glue becomes dry, and you can neither shut your mouth nor wink your eyes. If we had an enemy, and were vindictive, we should desire nothing better than to stand over him and taunt him with his degraded condition when he is having his nose glued. Pulling that organ, punching it, tweaking it, are nothing—nothing to gluing it!

And now for the wig—that nasty, greasy, stuffy thing that smells so of earth, and death, and mould. Mr. Clarkson may tell you that it is new and has never been worn; but you know better. There is the mark of a head inside it. Whose head? whose hair? Still, on it must go, and before the actor has adjusted it to his satisfaction, the call-boy is at the dressing-room door with 'Mr. Thespis Brown called.' And away Mr. Thespis rushes, down stairs, or up, as the case may be, and plunges upon the stage without having a moment to collect his scattered thoughts.

Nothing seems so easy or so natural as a well-sustained conversation on the stage. It is just what we do in ordinary life. But then let any one imagine having to repeat night after night the same words with the same looks and gestures. This is a very different thing. An answer to a speech on the stage is not suggested by the speech itself, but by the last few words of it, viz. the 'cue.' The actor has to watch for this cue; to fill up the time naturally, until it comes, and then to strike in with the right response. This is to a great extent a mechanical process—a process, too, which is a constant drag upon the natural impulses of the actors. The taking up of cues at the right moment, and the regulation of action, gesture, and position are all going on simul-

taneously with the act of expression and embodiment. Don't for a moment imagine, my good sir, that that popular favourite in petticoats is marking, and making a note of, your handsome face in the stalls while she is going through her part. She doesn't see *you*, or anybody else. Her mind is too much on the stretch to do anything but attend to the business of the scene. There are very few actors who ever get rid of a feeling of nervousness while they are before the public. With most of them the enactment of a part is an exciting, exhausting ordeal, which nothing but the applause of the public enables them to go through. We believe that the surest way to kill an actor would be for his audiences to conspire for a night or two not to applaud him. Applause is the food upon which he lives. If it were withheld for any length of time he would sink from sheer exhaustion.

The very smallest farce entails real work upon those who take a prominent part in it; but when an actor plays in three pieces during the evening, the labour he has to undergo multiplies upon him in a manner that is little suspected by those who see him only on the stage. We will suppose that Mr. Thespis Brown has played that part, for the proper embodiment of which he glued his nose and his eyebrows. Well; the curtain no sooner falls than he rushes away to his room to dress for the next piece. But before he dresses he has to undress. It is a comparatively easy matter to toss off a wig, while he is tossing off a glass of barley water—and there is no great difficulty in getting rid of a coat, waistcoat, and pantaloons—mayhap a doublet and hose—but it is by no means so simple or agreeable a task to take off a cotton wool nose, and a pair of crape hair eyebrows. Glue is a very adhesive substance, and when dry is very obstinate, and if, without the aid of warm water, you attempt to take off a false nose stuck on by its agency, the probability is that you will tear off a portion of the real nose with it. So Mr. Thespis Brown has to soak his nose and eyebrows in hot

water and then scrape them! Again he has to powder and paint his face—possibly this time to glue on a moustache—again to put on a wig and get into a suit of uncomfortable clothes, and once more, by the time he is dressed, the inexorable call-boy is at the door with—‘Mr. Thespis Brown called.’ A second time the actor, in a new character, with new words to speak, and new action to follow out, appears before the delighted public. How little do we think of the hurried and uncomfortable process of making-up to which he has been submitting himself in his dressing-room during the short wait between the pieces! Imagine all this repeated a third time! If any one fancies that it is light, pleasant work, let him call upon Mr. Thespis Brown any night about half-past eleven and see him in his dressing-room. There he sits, panting and exhausted, like an animal that has been hunted, submitting himself helplessly to the hands of his dresser. On the chairs around will be seen three sets of under-clothing, shirts, &c., all wet through, as if they had just come out of the washing-tub. They have come off the actor’s back! And now for the fourth time he has to make a change, and indue himself in the garments of private life. What, think you, is an actor fit for after all this work? You go home after the play and enjoy your supper, and possibly sit up for an hour or two talking over the pleasures of the evening. The man who has been amusing you is ‘dead-beat,’ and rolls into bed the moment he can reach his home.

‘Ah! but next morning he can lie to what hour he likes, and then he has all the rest of the day to enjoy himself.’

Well, considering that at night he works as hard as any paviour or excavator for six consecutive hours, he would be fairly entitled to ease and leisure during the day. But it is very seldom indeed that he can calculate upon any such indulgence. In country theatres, where the pieces are changed two or three times a week, the actor must work both night and day. It is quite a common occurrence for a country actor

on coming off the stage at midnight to receive a new part of twenty or thirty lengths, which he is required to study and learn before the following evening. A rehearsal of the piece is called at eleven o’clock in the morning, and by that time he must have mastered the words and business. There is nothing for it but to sit up all night and study; and then, when he has snatched an hour or two’s sleep, he must hurry off to the theatre to rehearse.

In London, where the pieces are not changed so frequently, and where the average run of a drama is from thirty to sixty nights, the work is not so heavy; but still it is far heavier than the public have any idea of. Although a piece may run for weeks, and even months, the manager finds it necessary to have something new in preparation in case of a sudden falling off in his business. It often happens that the moment a new piece is launched another is immediately put in rehearsal; and not unfrequently this second piece, after it has been rehearsed for perhaps a fortnight, is, through some accident or necessity, withdrawn to make room for a third. Here, then, is heavy day work for the actor—to say nothing of the ever-recurring rehearsal of farces and interludes. But even if there were no such things as rehearsals, and plays could be acted without any preparation whatever, the actor must still walk about town with a heavy log of responsibility dragging at his heels. It would not cause a vast amount of inconvenience if a shop or an office were not opened at ten in the morning; but the curtain of a theatre must rise at seven precisely, or the public will insist on knowing the reason why not. So it is necessary that the actor should arrive at the theatre ‘punctual to his time.’ The dread of being late is constantly haunting him; and for this reason he is afraid to take a little run out of town, to sit down to a late dinner, or to engage in any absorbing amusement as the time for the opening of the theatre approaches. It is necessary, also, that an actor should be within call in case of any

sudden necessity for altering the night's programme. This entails upon all actors the duty of looking at the bills regularly every morning as soon as they are published. It will not save an actor from being fined if he protest that he looked at the announcements in the newspapers. The manager will sternly reply—

'Sir, it is your duty to look at the bills of the theatre.'

Rehearsing is very tedious, wearisome, and vexatious work. Let us peep into the Theatre Royal ———, where they are now preparing a great sensation drama. The piece has been read by the author, and the actors and actresses are assembled on the stage to compare parts. This is the first step of the process. The actors simply read over their parts one with another to see that they have been correctly copied. This is a very necessary preliminary, as the copying of parts is a task of some difficulty, and is rarely performed with complete accuracy. Each part contains only the words spoken by the actor to whom it belongs, and the 'cues' of his interlocutors. The parts are copied in the following manner:—

'————— lamented, long-lost Box?'

'I am.'

'————— cruelly deceived.'

'Ha! then you are Cox?'

'————— I am.'

'I heard of it. I congratulate you—I give you joy! And now I think I'll go and take a stroll.'

'————— your intended!'

'My intended! You mean your intended.'

'————— yours!'

'How can she be my intended now that I am drowned?'

This is a passage from Mr. Box's part. The same passage in the part of Mr. Cox would run thus:—

'————— And Ramsgate.'

'It must be she! And you, sir, you are Box—the lamented, long-lost Box?'

'————— I am.'

'And I was about to marry the interesting creature you so cruelly deceived.'

'————— you are Cox?'

'I am.'

'————— take a stroll.'

'No, you don't! I'll not lose sight of you till I've restored you to the arms of your intended.'

'————— your intended.'

'No, sir, yours.'

'————— I am drowned.'

'You're no such thing, sir; and I prefer presenting you to Penelope Ann.'

The few words at the end of the lines are what are called the 'cues;' and occasionally, when an actor has not heard the piece read, these cue words and his replies to them are his only guide to what it is all about.*

The rehearsal of even a short farce like 'Box and Cox' will occupy at least a week; but a drama in three or four acts will require the attendance of 'all concerned' every day for three weeks or a month. The rehearsal of an important piece generally commences about eleven o'clock in the morning, and not unfrequently lasts until within an hour of the time for opening the doors to the public. During the whole of this time the actors are required to be in attendance at the wing, ready to go upon the stage whenever they are called. The same scenes are rehearsed over and over again until the persons engaged are so thoroughly wearied out that they cease to have any sense or conception of what they are doing. The first rehearsal is generally rather a pleasant affair. On this hopeful occasion, when the new piece is fresh and unhackneyed, the actors and actresses, the manager, the stage manager, and the author, usually make a point of presenting themselves in their best clothes. You may be sure that the leading lady will make her appearance arrayed

* The system of reading a piece in the green-room, and then giving out the parts with only cues to guide the actor to the sense of the context, is certainly a bad one. Actors do not listen to the piece as a whole when it is read to them; they are intent only on following the parts which they imagine are intended for themselves. The consequence is that they rarely know what the piece is about, even after they have played in it for a hundred nights.

in all the choicest glory of her wardrobe; she will do her hair in the most attractive style, sport all her jewellery, and wear the most delicate pair of light-coloured kid gloves that she can procure for love or money. The leading man will possibly endue himself in a brand new suit for the occasion; the low comedian will assert his high respectability as a social being by wearing a black frock coat of sober cut; and the author, in a similar fashion, will endeavour to impress the company in general, and the manager in particular, with the idea that he is in good credit with his tailor, and keeps an account at a banker's. After a day or two, however, these efforts to create an impression will gradually relax, and by the end of the week the leading lady will be content to present herself in a linsey-woolsey, while the leading gentleman, the low comedian, and the author will quietly relapse into an indifferent state of second best. After a week of rehearsal, when everybody is getting weary and ill-tempered, and when everybody has had angry words with everybody else, it is useless to keep up this deception any longer. Why should Mr. Author waste another white waistcoat and an embroidered shirt-front upon a leading lady who has had the ungrateful audacity to tell him that her part is weak, and wants writing up? And why should Miss Leading Lady go to the trouble of having her hair dressed, and to the expense of another pair of primrose kid gloves for the sake of a man who declines to write up her part and won't let her introduce her favourite song in that appropriate situation in the second act?

Rehearsing is a painful process. There is nobody to applaud, and, as very few actors show what they are going to do 'on the night,' there is really nothing to call for applause. The stage manager is a most inexorable person. His word is law, and must be obeyed as implicitly as the mandate of a slave-driver or a taskmaster at the hulks. At his word of command the great man of the theatre, the envied idol

of the public, must 'clear the stage or appear to his call as submissively as the meanest official in the house.

One of the greatest crimes against the Draconian code of the theatre is to be late for rehearsal and keep the stage waiting. Very amusing are the excuses sometimes made when this law is transgressed.

'Really, Mr. Driver,' Mr. Thespis Brown will say, with a countenance full of the deepest concern, 'I—I could not possibly help it; my cab broke down, and I had a very narrow escape with my life. It's a mercy I'm here at all.'

'Oh, Mr. Driver! I am so sorry,' says the leading lady; 'but mamma was taken with a fainting fit just as I was leaving home, and I was obliged to stop until the doctor came. Poor thing! she is really very seriously ill.'

'Stop! stop! don't say a word,' exclaims the comic man, anticipating Mr. Driver's wrath and the imposition of a fine. 'My house was broken into this morning by burglars, and the fellows made a clean sweep of my silver tea-service, my watch and chain, and all my wife's jewels. It's a mercy they didn't murder us in our beds, for they actually took the watch and chain from under my pillow as I lay peacefully reposing in the arms of Morpheus.'

Who could resist this? Not even Mr. Driver; for he can appreciate the loss of silver spoons. And then think of the narrow escape of Mr. Mopus! What if he had been——? Horrible to think of! There would have been no one to take the part. It would have been necessary to postpone the piece—perhaps to abandon it altogether. How could any one have the heart to fine a man who has been robbed of his silver teapot and has narrowly escaped having his throat cut?

'All over again' is not unfrequently the order which salutes the ear of the wearied actor after he has been rehearsing for three or four hours. He has scarcely a leg to stand upon (for Mr. Driver does not permit the luxury of seats), and he is faint and sick with hunger. That 'all over again' is like the quarter-

deck order for four dozen more lashes. Mr. Thespis is once more tied up to the halcyards, and Mr. Driver cuts away at him with his cat-o'-nine-tails for three or four hours more.

And, after all, stage rehearsals constitute but the mechanical portion of the preparation for the public performance of the piece. On the stage the actor learns and practises the business of the various scenes, marks his exits and his entrances, arranges where he is to cross, turn up, take the stage, &c. But he has yet to study his part. He has to conceive the character and shape the manner of its embodiment. This important part of the work he must do at home, in his own study, in the street as he walks along, or in some secluded spot in the Park, where there is nobody to overhear his ravings and witness his strange gesticulations. This part of an actor's work is often performed under serious difficulties. It occasionally happens that the person who lives in the next house, or lodges in the floor below, entertains a strong, if not a conscientious, objection to the daily practice of the words and business of a hero of tragedy addicted to vociferous exclamations and broad-sword combats. Others have a similar distaste for domestic practice in nigger melodies and break-down dances. When these objections are urged with force and determination, the actor finds it convenient to betake himself to the wilds of Regent's Park or the solitudes of Hampstead Heath. Turf, however, is not a good thing to 'take,' in the stage sense, and low comedy goes for nothing in a high wind. Trees and stones are insensible to the beauties of the nigger melody, and the daisies respond but dully to the peculiar humours of the break-down dance. Rehearsing out of doors, too, has this disadvantage—that when you are caught at it, the lieges put you down as a lunatic, and wonder why your friends have let you out without a keeper. The feelings of any sensitive person who is caught offering his kingdom for a horse on Hampstead Heath at

noontide are by no means to be envied.

But in preparation for the performance of a piece, there are other matters besides rehearsal and study which employ the time and occupy the anxious attention of the actor. He has to look after his dress and properties. It is, of course, of the highest importance that an actor should look the character he represents; and one important essential to this end is a characteristic make-up. In order to secure this the actor finds it necessary to spend a good deal of time in the wardrobe of the theatre. Now the wardrobe of a theatre is not generally a very pleasant place; nor is the wardrobe-keeper generally a very agreeable person to deal with. The room bears a close resemblance to those first-floor *sulons* at our uncle's which we are accustomed to catch a glimpse of, occasionally, when the windows are open in warm weather. There is a general second-hand aspect about the place, and a pervading smell of stale humanity, which are anything but pleasant. The costumes are wrapped up in bundles and stowed away in racks all round the room, and the dingy, greasy linings of doublets, trunks, and shirts, which you see peeping out, are by no means suggestive of magnificence or splendour. To get what you want out of this extensive and varied stock is no easy matter. The wardrobe-keeper insists, as a rule, that any article he may chance to lay his hand upon is exactly what you require. Inform him that you want the habiliments necessary for the due embodiment of Jem Baggs, and he will complacently offer you a slouched hat and a slashed doublet. Announce yourself as Alexander the Great, and he will endeavour to convince you that a square-cut blue coat with brass buttons is the very thing. The ideas of the property-man are bound fast in the rusty shackles of tradition: Stalker always wore that black velvet shape, why shouldn't you? Mugginton had that pair of check trousers made expressly for the part; you couldn't possibly do better than don the trousers, and follow in the footsteps

of Mugginton. If you are not a thorough master of the locutions which characterized the conversation of the soldier in the seven ages, you will never get what you want from the wardrobe-keeper. Then, again, you have to wrestle with the property-man. The property-man has it in his power to put you to

the torture—ay, to kill you outright, if he should feel so disposed. He can smother you in a helmet, break your ribs with a cuirass, pierce you with an unbuttoned foil, or dislocate every joint in your body with a basket-horse several hundred weights too heavy for you. If you don't look after him in time, depend upon

it he will punish you in one way or another. Not that the property-man is a cruel, a bloodthirsty, or a vindictive person; on the contrary, he is, in general, a most amiable individual, overflowing with the milk—slightly flavoured with rum—of human kindness, and is always ready to oblige. But then his artistic eye is in the habit of looking at things in the abstract—at helmets

without regard to the heads they are to cover, and at basket-horses without regard to the legs that are to bestride them. The property-man requires to be instructed, watched, persuaded, talked to like a father, and, failing that, talked to like a cruel uncle, whose profession is military.

At last the night comes. And oh! the torture of a first night! A



few minutes before the rising of the curtain, the actor tries on his dress for the first time. He looks at himself in the glass, and probably his appearance suggests an entirely different reading of the character from that which he has conceived at rehearsals. The 'make-up' suggests many things that had not occurred to him while he practised the part in the habiliments of every-day life. These new ideas crowding and rushing upon him at the last moment drive the words of the part completely out of his head. He dare not refer to his part; it would confuse him still more. Self-possessed as he seems to the audience, he is almost faint with nervousness and anxiety. For the moment he has forgotten every line of his part, and he plunges upon the

stage without even knowing the first words of his opening speech. He throws himself blindly into the arms of his dramatic fate. It is a trying ordeal; every faculty is stretched to the utmost; every nerve is strung to the highest pitch; and at length, when the curtain falls, and the actor, with the sense of having escaped some great peril, retires to his dressing-room to recover his breath and calm his agitated feelings, he is most probably met by a message from the manager, requesting him to attend another rehearsal of the piece on the following morning.

Such is the work of an actor. Let no man fancy that it is mere child's play.

A. H.

'LE SPORT' AT BADEN.

N Baden: when the sun is down, the air cool and fragrant, and the race of man that in Baden dwells out—out on chairs; out, gently and languidly strolling, clustering and drifting along, rather than walking—floating as it were, not sitting, upon chairs, chattering, laughing, and listening to music. In Baden: when the Vauxhall stop is on; when the lights twinkle and glimmer among the orange: when the green 'kiosque' blazes with rich but softened effulgence over the heads of the busy orchestra discoursing melodious music; when the waiters outside have a busy time of it, and flutter in and out among a hundred tables as though their napkins were white wings; and when the Priests Moloch inside have on the whole about as much as they can do. In Baden, which, were it

an island, should be called Cythera, and into which Paris the Pleasant has sent down all its social theatrical properties, and the favourite men and women who play upon *that* stage, and in that special line, with all their dresses and decorations—in short, Baden, the gay, the gaudy, the painted, the meretricious, where naughtiness goes to have its country air and little furlough, and dresses and paints itself, and enamels itself with even more pains and toil than in wicked Paris itself. In Baden, then, at about eleven o'clock, when the gambling is being hurried on at more express speed as the time grows shorter, and the guillotine has but a short space to finish with its victims, and people are beginning to drop away home.

Under the great yellow columns of the temple, and a little to the right of the door, has gathered a large cluster of men, some sitting, some standing, some leaning on the backs of chairs, but all talking noisily; some are tall, richly oiled, curly men, of the hairdresser-bust pattern, who have left the pleasant hunting-grounds of Beau Garçonhood some seven or eight years ago, never to return; some are coarse and raw-faced, a good deal swollen about the waist, and addressed complementarily as 'Mons. le Baron'; some are mosaic eminently, and have marked bluish tones upon their lips and cheeks; some are the true young Frenchman type, the Edouards or Eugenes, who shave their cheeks closely, and bear twined moustaches and a large tuft upon their chins. All wear the little, round, grey, English *déshabille* hat, bound with parti-coloured ribbons; all have cigars, and all are very busy with little pencils and note-books. The crowd 'circulates' below on the walk, passes in and passes out. From within, through the open window, floats the click-click of the roulette-ball, dancing in its brass cell; but this company of busy men pursue their task busily. These, in fact, are the racing-men of France—the 'gilt youth' of Paris, the desperate enthusiasts of 'Le Sport,' who would endure any suffering, gash, maim themselves with delight, if they could only purchase the genuine tone and flavour of 'le sportsman' English.

And to-morrow are the great Baden races, really famous in the continental world, and now developing, by the forcing process of money and patronage, into the Derby of foreign states.

Wonderfully English are these 'gilt youth' of Paris. They affect a rough stamp and stride, and a blunt, short voice, according to the British type: their clothes are not the sinuous, wavy articles we are accustomed to see—high in the waist, of the favourite, sickly, slate colour. They have our English tweeds, and the true loose English cut, most of them favouring with their orders Mr. Poole, and other distinguished 'confectioners' of tailoring. Many of them have actually learnt to break English with an intelligibility wonderful for Frenchmen; having acquired this gift from journeys to 'Le Leger' or 'Le Derbi.' I hear them sprinkling their own French with little English words, such as 'eggsactlee, mon cher;' and drawing near to their extemporized 'cercle,' I learn some more of their manners and customs.

There is one standing up in the centre, with reddish hair, thin, saturnine, a 'suspicion' of a moustache, but altogether an excellent figure after the English, who proves to be a notoriety. I hear him addressed as 'Cad'rousse,' and discovered him to be that notorious Duc de Grammont-Caderousse, who not so far back killed the luckless Dillon in a duel at Paris. *Le Sport* brought about that unhappy accident, and set the duc in the dock; but that terrible memory does not seem to trouble him, nor does the ghost of his victim cast a shadow across his betting-book: he is at this moment the leader and centre of that 'cercle.'

That burly man, red-cheeked and bourgeois-looking, who wears a snuff-coloured coat, is a Count now well known to the English ring—a good-humoured, business-like professor, with a fat cigar between his teeth, against which he seems to slide out his words. Here, too, is M. Aumont and Baron Nivière—names both fairly known to the English turf. Here, too, is Baron La Grange, very like the late M. Jullien, brandishing a pencil fiercely instead of the baton of the defunct maestro. Here, too, are some of the English 'gilt youth'—cream of the cream, who have the entrance to the

Paris clubs, and it sounds strange to hear the mixture of French and English. And here, too, on the edge of the ring, are some of the coarser and rougher elements of the British betting-man, faces also familiar at home; but I note a calm, quiet possession about these characters which contrasts oddly with the enforced steadiness which sits but ill on the lively French tempers. These blunt, plain-spoken, business-like gentry, I can see, are regarded with profound awe and respect by the young seigneurs. Ah! could they but compass that thoughtful self-possession and imposing demeanour!

Straying thence a moment into the realms of King Roulette, I am drifted up to the table, beside four or five young lads, or, at least, who have the air of young lads; who, besides, have a shiny look about their faces significant of suffering from heat, and wear showy neck-cloths wound about their throats. I am conscious, at the same moment, of a strange and powerful flavour, which faintly suggests stables. I recognize these as the young English jockeys, who have come over to ride at the great Baden races. The stamp of their nationality is marvellously legible; and the special hall-mark of their own particular profession is still more conspicuous. One, indeed, is rather a boy-man than a boy—is, indeed, a boy that has seen some thirty or forty summers.

It is what may be called a British night at the gaming-house; or, to speak with more delicacy, at the 'Conversation House.' Hotels are full to bursting, and have been sorrowfully turning away newly-arrived guests all the evening. The little theatrical town is full: the administration of the little theatrical town liberally gets up these Olympian games of racing for the pure entertainment of the people, and also for the additional 'conversation' that shall go on at their rooms. They are very full indeed; every one is struggling and pushing to get to the table; and our jockey-lads, who are to ride to-morrow, with stout, lithe English arms, have got good places at the bottom, con-

veniently situated next the columns 'douze 1"', douze 2"', douze dernier.' One has begun—a gentleman who has ridden a good deal in France, and is fairly familiar with the French tongue. He is carrying off several five-franc pieces, much to the pride and satisfaction of his comrades, who look upon this as only another proof of British 'pluck' and prowess, generally, in a foreign land. Presently they are all drawn in and play boldly and with competition. They converse with each other loudly, and in the language of their country—sometimes, indeed, with the metaphors of the ring. Agreeable Frenchmen look on amused, and give them help, sometimes tell them when they have won, which they don't know frequently—a state soon found out by persons of industry, whose *speciality* is in that direction, notably by the old lady at the sign of the carbuncle, who quietly rakes in a small heap of their money won a few minutes before.

They begin to play in a bold, reckless way quite characteristic. Nothing more lowly than napoleons and half napoleons—On the red, on the black, on pair and unpair, on the columns, on everything. But they have a fancy for 'the colour' and stick to it manfully. One leads valiantly, and seems to be sweeping in his little gold coins in twos and threes. The elderly boy, who is of saving habits, seems to be writhing in frightful agonies, and finally yields to a small temptation, taking the shape of silver. He loses, and is overwhelmed with despair, and breaks out in damps as though after much horse exercise. He has staked on the number thirty, and the number that has come is thirty-one. 'Never mind, Bill,' is his comrades' admonitory consolation, 'you went wery nigh it; try next time.'

Coming back again in a quarter of an hour from the gentlemanly pandemonium in the next room, where trente and quarante is being played for large stakes, with an ease and courteousness truly admirable, I find it is all over with our jockeys; they are standing disconsolate, like the Peris; and in a certain delicate

sense like the Peris—more or less stripped. They have changed very many five-pound Bank of England notes, sent down to them with affable courtesy by the obliging croupier, and the results have only gone the way of all gambling flesh. They look ruefully on the green board. Most to be pitied is the aged boy, who has abject misery in his face. Perhaps the aged boy has a wife and children somewhere; he is certainly old enough: and presently they have all slunk away, to take carriages, &c., to racing stables, and can be heard denouncing these 'foreign swindling fellows' very fiercely.

There are several local journals in this gilt little kingdom; and one notably, whose circulation can scarcely be healthy, but which I suspect to be nurtured artificially by the 'administration.' For weeks before the local journal has been working this affair of the coming steeple-chases with wonderful industry. Paragraphs, too, have been fluttering over Europe, dropped, as it were, into the nooks and corners of Paris journals, in that omnivorous column, '*faits divers*.' This, too, has been the work of the laborious administration. It is all to the one air, introduced artfully, and in that free and easy conversational manner, as it were on the steps of a café, with which the Paris press manufactures a puff direct. It is insinuated that this year everything gorgeous, glorious, glittering, amusing, theatrical, fanciful, will be at Baden. Aladdin's lamp has been rubbed. New theatre, new 'tribune,' new company, new paint, new lights, new everything. Edouard, who is talking (in the conversational paragraph) with Henri, is *accablé de douleur*, even unto suicide, that he cannot be present. But one notable fact in reference to 'Lor Wellington,' which I see in the 'Echo des Bains,' speaks what is called trumpet-tongued in favour of the irresistible attractions of the programme. A more remarkable instance of the power of pleasure on the common mind cannot be conceived.

'Lor Wellington' we are told, 'pushed' by that overpowering taste for the 'vie Sportive,' which is so truly

English, had made all his arrangements for the coming season. He had looked fondly towards Scotland for a suitable spot to gratify his taste—and so wonderful is the power of money in this country of England (says 'L'Echo'), that in a week, a lovely place in Argyleshire was secured, abounding in a particular species of bird called 'graous,' a whole shooting 'service' was organized, and a pack of hounds brought down expressly to chase the 'graous.' Chasseurs, guns, everything was engaged, and 'Lor Wellington' being besides an ardent votary of angling, a large species of vessel, commonly known in England as a 'vacht' was got somehow upon a contiguous lake. Suddenly the news of the coming races reached him: in a moment the balance of his mind was upset. He gave up the '*immense et giboyeuse terre*' that he had hired, broke up the whole 'service sportive,' abandoned the 'graous,' and rushed to Baden! This curious story is really gravely reported in the columns of the 'Echo des Bains,' or Universal Gambling News.

The coming festival has indeed drawn together many notables, English and foreign. The famous Count Bismarck was here but yesterday; but is a little too busy 'making' the book of his royal master to attend to other 'odds.' A rather dandified minister, with a double eye-glass, and *un peu usé*. Count de Morny—who has horses of his own, an English duke or two, several English authors, a king or two dropping in for a couple of days (like that heavy, carter-looking royalty of Holland, who lolls ponderously in his coach), and the whole rank and file of the continental sporting world—the Duc de Fitzjames, Baron Schickler, Choiseul, Lupin, Nivière, and the Jockey Club *en masse*. It is, indeed, to be '*la vie sportive*.' No wonder an enthusiastic journalist should exclaim in delight 'C'est comme à Newmarkt!' The Jockey Club are, indeed, the grand feature. It has come down bodily from Paris: 'jockey' would seem to be the favourite spelling. The body itself is an inexhaustible study: it seems to be a bit of laborious acting all

through, and *la Drama* itself to be 'le Sport.' It is wonderful the inconvenience, the trouble, the suffering, this noble youth must go through to carry out this harlequinade faithfully. And most strangely contrast with these racing spasms, the calm, natural bearing of the English element; the prodigious professional *aplomb*, at which the foreign imitators look with a species of despair. Their movements are watched all day by admiring crowds.

The noble seigneurs move about together all day long in their English 'tweeds,' smoke cigars, and discuss 'le Sport.' One morning, down by the little rows of shops, which look like a pretty fair, I see a truly 'sportive' trait, a bet, a wager decided between two leading patrons of the turf. It is a race on two strong-backed chairs ridden *à cheval* by two noble 'jockeys,' and started fairly by a friend. A truly comic performance, neither being allowed to put his feet to the ground. To the gentlemen riders it must have been a painful and even an agonizing operation; but they went through it with Spartan-like courage.

They all dined together every day at M. Chevet's café; M. Reiset, we were told, kindly taking on himself the task of ordering an exquisite banquet. This gentleman's gifts in that direction, we are told, are of no ordinary sort. They had their own *bouquetière*, or nosegay-seller—a smart, pert young lady, known as Isabelle, who always appeared, on occasions of state, in a full Highlander's suit, trews, petticoat and all complete, and, it must be said, looked well, though a little startling in that costume. She had her little pony-carriage, in which she drove out, kilt and all, to the races. There is a rival *bouquetière* attached to the gambling-room, who flashes out in a sort of Spanish fancy dress, and presents the company with some very poor flowers indeed, the remuneration for which she 'leaves to yourself'—always an embarrassing scale of charge.

There is charming weather—a perfect 'Ladies' Day,' as the French politely put it—no clouds, no wind, no glare, and no doubt. Our the-

atrical town is full of bustle, and looks so gay and brilliant—as, indeed it always does—that it seems as though our Baden opera corps had put in newly-painted side scenes at street corners, on the hill side, and at suitable openings—for all houses here look like 'flats,' and, as it were, on loan from the theatre. The whole community is in a bustle, more or less, directly or indirectly, in reference to the races. The horse interest is important. For carriages, horses, and vehicles generally, a large tariff is in force. Already the roads—the long, level avenues, more than roads, with trees like sentries on each side—are filled with a procession of vehicles. It is well to start betimes for 'le Sport' is to be at Iffizheim, seven miles away.

At Iffizheim how curious the contrast between our Baden Derby and (not an English Derby, which would be an unfair standard) a respectable English race. There are handsome stone 'tribunes,' not 'stands,' more or less architectural; and these tribunes are tolerably crowded with the Paris patrons of 'le Sport;' but *voilà tout!* A small sprinkling, or say a hundred blue-frocked natives of the district, looking on more in wonder than in pleasure—these represent that roaring, shrieking, surging, half-mad ocean that at home make up the excitement of a race. It is like actors playing to a thin house. The grand gentility of 'le Sport' up in the 'tribunes' (one napoleon admission) have it all to themselves.

The honest bourgeoisie—who, indeed, after half an hour's stare, find it all a bore and go back to work—do indeed more wonder than admire. They wonder at the gentleman in the French-cut sporting coat, who carries a red flag, and swears so terribly with suitable English corroboratives, and who, I find from the cards, to be 'M. Mackenzie-Grieves,' and who starts the horses. They wonder at the perverseness of 'les jockeis,' who will not, strange to say, range themselves *en queue* as at the doors of a French theatre. They wonder at the English voices of the 'jockeis,' at their gaudy sleeves and jackets, and

at the horses—the marvellous, glistening horses, who here among these rough, clumsy, 'Punch-like' animals, seem creatures of another kind and race, and, strictly speaking, *not* horses.

As a whole the racing was poor, or seemed poor: the whole spectacle wanted blood, fire, heat, and general galvanism. Above all, most strange was it, to see the winner coming in neck and neck with a rival amid profound silence. The real spectacle, and genuine part of the races set in late in the evening, when the sun was down, between six and seven o'clock, which was the progress home and triumphal entry into the little city. The gayest, most exhilarating little bit of festivity that can be conceived, and worth the 'courses,' La Touques, Iffizheim, tribunes, and the whole of 'le Sport' together.

To stand just at the turn of the hilly street, under the porch of the 'Court of Baden Hotel'—a charming house of entertainment—and they were all seen to pass by like a stage procession—such a clatter; such a spinning of wheels; such a riotous, ferocious cracking of whips—not thin and reedy like our own native whip-cracking, but full, rich, and startling—like rifles going off. Such colours; such variety; such motley contrast! There is a turn at the corner, so that the effect is not spoiled by seeing them drawing near; but they plunge suddenly into view. Now an elegant, Paris-built nobleman's carriage, coronets on the panels, English horses, and servants in lake-coloured coats turned up with gold. It comes round the corner, passes by, and is gone in a flash. Now a cloud of graceful pony-carriages, each with a shade like a palm-leaf fixed over it to keep off the sun—each, too, having radiant demoiselles in gay turquoise-coloured boys' caps, with small peaks, each peak set off with a *bouton* of diamonds: a little miniature lacquey—Tom Thumb in service—sitting behind with his arms folded. They, too, are gone in a flash. Then *char-à-bancs* laden with the young patrons of 'le Sport,' each with four horses and postilions.

Note that everybody of decency and respectability has four horses. Most picturesque are the post-boys or post-men; we hear of their coming by a perfect orchestra of jangling bells, and fearful whip-cracking, and they then come into view, going by in a fierce swinging trot, and laden open carriages behind. Each *cortège*, taken all in all, must be a good hundred yards long, for there is tremendous space between leaders and wheelers. The post-boys have the most picturesque dress, as it were from the property-room of the theatre—bright yellow jackets, scarlet collars, broad glazed hats with gold cords, a horn about their shoulders, and the inevitable but effective jack-boots. Very fierce-moustachioed, truculent-looking fellows—looking more fierce and truculent as each, when he comes into view of the populace, lifts himself in his stirrups and huge jack-boots, and with tremendous vindictiveness gives three or four savage expressions of his whip from side to side. This token of triumphant entry is performed regularly by every one that passes by, after which, with swinging traces, and draggling splinter-bars that almost trail along the ground, they go, jogging, trot-

ting, jangling, rattling, rumbling—out of sight! It seems more a charge of troopers (even to the way they carry their huge glazed hats far down on the back of their necks) than the sober, untheatrical bearing of decent post-boys. Effective, too, are the great eilwagen, or yellow diligences, bearing the royal arms, and laden with cheerful company, in lavender gloves, who look down and look out with pride on the gathered crowds, and which a flame-coloured post-boy—a savage Hulan,—directs, riding the 'wheeler,' and driving the leaders with long whip and reins gathered in his hands.

Now floats by what seems to be a cart of crimson, blood-coloured flush; but which on calm reflection resolves itself into the outriders, postillions, menials before and behind in brightest liveries of the sovereign of the place. Comes by, too, presently, the gross, heavy royalty of Holland, with sad-coloured liveries. Comes by, finally, a loose miscellany of *char-à-bancs*, cabs—cars—and even carts of the period.

This festival delays all things. The hour for table d'hôte—unalterable usually—is postponed indefinitely. We do not dine till half-past six—seven.

WAITING.

(Illustrated by Louis Huard.)

SHE had gazed from the window long,
 Down the dim and crowded street:
 She had listened with ear down-bent
 To the tread of the passing feet.

She had watched the last flush die out
 From the cold grey winter sky,
 And the first pale star look sadly down;
 She had greeted it with a sigh.

Like a flash in the street below
 The lamplighter sped along;
 And, solemnly faint and low,
 Came the notes of an old street song.

They were singing a well-known lay
 She often had sung to him
 Long ago, in the country home:
 And her eyes with tears grew dim.

But she turned from the window away,
 And glanced round the home-like room:
 Tears, tears, must not greet him of foolish heart;
 I know that he soon will come.

And so, woman-like, with a half-breathed sigh,
 She shuts out the dreary night,
 Draws close the curtains, and tends the fire,
 Till the little room glows with light.

She is kneeling before the hearth,
 Little wife, with an anxious face;
 For the wearying thought comes back again,
 He is late; time wears on apace.

And the firelight gleams on the soft-brown hair,
 And kisses the rounded cheek:
 Deep thoughts are thronging the woman's heart,
 What a woman's lips fear to speak.

'I love him! I love him!' she whispers low;
 'He is all the world to me;
 But, ah! husband mine, thou must never know
 How this frail heart worships thee.

'Yet I often think, when I'm waiting here—
 Watching and waiting alone—
 What if the world steal away his heart,
 Which is now my own—my own?

'For what am I but a simple girl,
 With only my love to give?
 And yet he tells me I am more dear
 Than aught that this world can give.

'But when, as to-night, he is late—so late,
 My heart sinketh faint and low;
 But all these fancies, my best beloved,
 Thou must never, ah! never know.'

Little she dreams of the loving eyes
 That are watching her from the door;
 And how deep, deep, in her husband's heart
 The love groweth more and more;



Drawn by Louis Huard.

"WAITING."

[See the Poem.]

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Drawn by F. W. Lawson.

MISS BATEMAN AS "LEAH."

[See the Sketch.

Till, as he watches her kneeling there,
 She seems, to his fancy quaint,
 Like the guardian angel of his home,
 A woman, and yet a saint.
 Saint and angel she is to him,
 Fond loving woman beside;
 More fair and dear as the trial-ried wife
 Than the day she was his bride.
 'What, Nelly! musing?' a hand is laid
 On the fair and down-bent brow;
 And stands beside her the watched-for one.
 Ah! where are her sad thoughts now?
 All vanished and fled at the well-known voice,
 At the clasp of the fond embrace;
 And the firelight falls on no fairer sight
 Than the young wife's happy face.

KATE JOSEPHINE BATEMAN.

THE genius of the young American actress, whose impersonation of *Leah* is drawing all London to a theatre which hitherto courted only a class, has been so talked about and written about for the last few weeks, and is now so generally acknowledged, that it remains for us, in presenting her portrait to our readers, to accompany it only by a brief notice of the previous career of the original.

Kate Josephine Bateman was born on the 7th of October, 1842, in the city of Baltimore and state of Maryland. Her family is of English origin, and one of the oldest and most respectable in the State. Her parents were both at one time on the stage, though their ancestors had been unconnected with that profession; and but for an accident which befel them during their career, it is probable that the present public favourite would have been lost in private life.

It happened that, at the theatre in Louisville, Kentucky, a difficulty arose in the performance of 'The Children in the Wood.' The principal actors were all present, including Mr. Bateman himself, who played his celebrated part of *Walter*. The *Wood* too was there, but where were the Children? They had both been taken ill. They were as important as the Prince of Denmark to the play of 'Hamlet;' and it was apparent that either there must be

no play, or other children must be found. In this dilemma the happy thought suggested itself to the parents to substitute their own daughters, Kate and Ellen, who in a couple of hours were schooled to the parts, and acquitted themselves with an ability which was the more remarkable as they had never, up to that time, seen the inside of a theatre. Their singular aptitude for the art determined their vocation. There was no resisting the verdict of the public. Accompanied by their parents and brother, they made a tour all over the States, and were received with enthusiasm at the metropolis itself. It was in the winter of 1849 that they first appeared at the Old Broadway Theatre.

In 1851—the year of the Great Exhibition—the children visited London, and their first appearance at the St. James's Theatre received the stamp of unequivocal success. London audiences are not, as a general rule, partial to 'Infant Prodigies,' and nothing but their real talent and intelligence could have saved them from neglect. One writer, indeed, condemned the performance upon what he called 'moral grounds.' He considered that children brought thus young before the public must be forced into unhealthy precocity. Whatever the application of his remarks to other cases, it was soon plain that they had nothing to do with this. A more acute critic

saw that what the children did was inspired by nature, and not forced by training. 'It is impossible,' he said, 'to see these youthful performers, to observe the expression of their faces, and to listen to the tones of their voices, without the conviction that they are animated by a native intelligence and feeling which all the instruction in the world would not impart.' 'Punch,' too, said of them that their acting seemed an enjoyment—'a pastime which you imagine they would cry if deprived of. It is literally "playing" with them. They romp about the stage as naturally as if they were in a nursery; and if a nursery for actors is ever founded for the British stage, the Bateman children ought to be at the head of it.' The pieces, it should be mentioned, in which they had made their principal effects, were a little comedy, written for them, called 'The Young Couple,' and the last act of Richard III.

In Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dublin, the verdict of London was confirmed; and after fourteen months spent in these islands, the little artists and their proud parents once more crossed the Atlantic.

Then followed another tour in the States, and a trip to California. In the latter place the success of the children was immense; but as children there was soon nothing more left for them to do, and a retirement, for a time at any rate, was wisely resolved upon. The retirement lasted five years; and at its close it is only of the subject of this notice that we hear. Her sister married early, and the public saw her no more. Kate Bateman retired to the schoolroom, and the studies which she now sought with an enthusiasm not inferior to that which had inspired her in her former successes with the public, gave a new vigour to her mind and a new world to her imagination. Art, which had been a plaything, now became a passion. Her subsequent career was inevitable; and on the 19th of March, 1859, at the age of seventeen, Miss Bateman appeared once more before an American public. The play selected for the

occasion] was founded upon Longfellow's poem of 'Evangeline,' and called by that name. Her admiration for, and beautiful reading of the work had suggested its adaptation for the purpose. The piece made a great success, and its fair heroine was at once established as the greatest actress in America. The remainder of her career, up to her appearance in London, may be briefly told. In 1860, she again appeared in 'Geraldine,' 'the heroine,' we are informed, 'of her mother's *chef d'œuvre*;' and we afterwards hear of her in a range of characters whose diversity is a marvel in itself. But whether in *Julia* (in 'The Hunchback'), *Pauline* (in 'The Lady of Lyons'), *Juliet*, or *Lady Macbeth* (not to mention other parts scarcely so well known to the London public), her great powers were equally apparent, and those who have beheld all her previous impersonations might well be prepared for the brilliant triumph which her performance of *Leah* has since gained in London. *Leah*, we should not omit to remark, was also a great character of its accomplished representative when in America, and it was in this that she made one of her most distinguished successes in that country. Of the play, which all London is crowding to see, what need be said here? Suffice it that the portrait here presented represents the heroine at one of the most striking points of the representation, and that it is an admirable likeness in every respect, as far as character is concerned.

If the artist has not conveyed a perfect idea of the grace and beauty of the original—of the nameless charm which pervades her movements and her utterance—of that expression of the mind which, for want of a better word, we agree to call 'manner'—it is because he is only an artist and not a magician. Those who desire to realize the grand passion and exquisite tenderness, the terrible hate and intense love, which Miss Bateman is equally capable of rendering, must follow the rest of London who weep nightly at the sorrows of the poor forsaken *Leah*.

S. L. B.

LOBSTER SALAD.

BY A CRUSTACEAN ARTIST.

SHOWING THAT LOBSTERS ARE ALWAYS IN SEASON, AND WHERE THEY ARE FOUND:

WITH FULL DIRECTIONS HOW TO SELECT AND COOK,
AND PARTICULARLY HOW TO DIGEST, THEM.

I MADE my way to the shore. Prouton still lived! That was a solace to my sad and lacerated heart, as to my inward man craving for a lobster salad. But, alas! he lived not as in the days of my boyhood; he appeared old and decrepit, and no longer caught lobsters. I endeavoured to awaken him to those happy days I have mentioned; but, I grieve to say, with him they were almost past and gone. He, or his missus, kept a shop wherein might be bought shilling books, shells from the East, said to have been collected on the island shores: the only thing I recognized was the mixed coloured sand in bottles, from Alum Bay. I bade Prouton adieu—probably for ever—and went my way with a tear on my eyelash and—no lobsters.

Were I to dwell on the numerous

tales—ay, merry tales—in which the animal lobster has taken a most meritorious and gastronomic part, I would require a quarto instead of these few chapters. I will therefore close this by remarking that, in a well-known summer-house, where Gray wrote his 'Elegy,' hard by the sparkling Thames, amid the foliage which adorns the velvet lawn of one of the many charming residences so well known to those who visit—and who has not?—the beautiful neighbourhood of Richmond and Petersham, there once gathered together, under the stars of a clear summer's sky, two or three celebrated individuals, in the enjoyment of fine-flavoured Havannahs, iced champagne, and lobster salad. Whether it was the effects of the Havannahs, the cool wine, or the

lobster salad, I will not assert, though I fully believe it to have been the latter; but then and there was developed, and decided on, the untoward, or possibly ill-managed event, entitled, I fancy, the Descent on Boulogne. One of those individuals, I need scarcely say, is now the Emperor of a people who claim precedence in all questions of gastronomy, though I by no means accord them the blue riband in matters wherein the lobster is concerned.

Again, it is said the Reform Bill was passed under similar influences. For the then Lord John—as he ever will be in the hearts of the people of England—having eaten copiously of a lobster-salad supper, felt so invigorated on the day following that he beheld, written on the pavement, as he walked firmly down to the House, the precise number of the majority which passed it; and the Bill—that Bill which has caused such happiness to the people of England—passed and was receipted. Doubtless it was, I take it, the same influences prompted Sir Robert Peel to abolish the Corn Laws. I feel convinced that nothing short of a lobster supper could have nerved him for the herculean task. I would therefore recommend all desirous of political fame to eat lobster salads.

In New York there still lives a gentleman of character and fortune, unhappily under restraint, whose love was so ardent for crustacean food that, when in a state of more than usual excitement, he always fancies and proclaims himself a lobster—possibly, a very big one; for finer or fatter can scarcely be wished than are to be seen on the hospitable tables at New York. And, to do the citizens justice, they are making great progress in the art of gastronomy, as in all other arts; not that as yet they have attained that of making a successful lobster salad; nor, indeed, do they justly estimate the precaution necessary for the concoction of a mayonnaise. My final chapter will, however, sufficiently instruct them, and the sooner they put the art they will here learn into practice, the sooner shall I have the pleasure of dining with them.

It is said, and not incorrectly said, as we all full well know, or at least ought to know, if the true feelings of human nature touch our hearts—

‘That no age, no profession, no station is free—
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee.’

This, however, like most poetry, may be improved on. Let the reader judge if my version has not far more of poetical softness about it—

‘No age, no profession, no station is free—
For princes, as people, like lobsters, you see.’

And besides being poetical it has the rare merit of being true.

In corroboration, I may mention that the beautiful Bay of Halifax is alive with lobsters; and during the visit of our Royal Prince—God bless and protect him!—he tried his hand at catching them, an amusement, ay, sport, I may call it, to which the people are given. The practice is followed somewhat in a similar manner to that of the fishermen in the Bays of Naples and Messina, by torchlight. The boat being rowed near to the shore where the lobsters are feeding, the moment the light flashes on the water they rush towards it, when the fisher places himself at the head of the boat, armed with a prong fork, and secures them by hundreds. If report speaks truly, his Royal Highness, in company with a British Admiral, was wont to enjoy this nocturnal sport most successfully, and doubtless equally enjoyed the salads. I should, however, prefer to offer him one at Babbicombe.

CHAPTER V.

COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS.

The question of commerce, even crustacean commerce, which may possibly appear to the world as a mere myth, an ingenious speculation, is, nevertheless, one of vast importance, of far more importance, even to the Messrs. Rothschild and the gentlemen of the Stock Exchange than they appear to have time to question. They buy lobsters and eat lobsters whensoever and wheresoever attainable, for the most part without giving a thought to the wealth fished up from the sea and scattered over the world.

I shall treat cursorily on this great question. I have never considered myself capable of accepting the onerous position of Chancellor of the Exchequer, even had it been offered to me, solely on the grounds of insufficient financial knowledge. That two and two make four I am ready to believe and do believe; beyond this my only desire is to see the right man in the right place, and, as far as I can judge, at present I am satisfied with Mr. Gladstone. I wonder if he has the good taste to enjoy a lobster. Whitebait I know he does. Nevertheless, crustacean commerce is vast and curious, and deserves considerable attention. Indeed, the moment I am elected to represent the beautiful little town of Dartmouth, South Devon, in Parliament—a somewhat fishy constituency, on whom I can count on a majority the moment I have time and money sufficient to offer myself as their political slave—I intend to bring the matter of crustacean statistics before the legislature, and show the world at large how great an addition to the revenue would arise were a slight tax imposed on the sale of stale lobsters. Meanwhile permit me to name that it is almost impossible to ascertain the numbers that are daily brought into the London market by the South-Western and Great Western Railways, and the steamers from Guernsey and Jersey; and, again, from the coast of Ireland to Liverpool; while from the coast of Scotland, the Orkneys and the Lewis Islands, it is computed that no less than 150,000 find their way to Billingsgate. The principal supply, however, is from Norway, from whence we derive at least 600,000; and the London market is thus supplied at the rate of from 25,000 to 30,000 lobsters daily. Allow, then, as many in proportion in all the great cities and towns throughout the land—although London is unquestionably the principal mart—and the multitude consumed is enormous.

But it is not in the great cities of England only that a lobster commerce is effectively carried on; very far from it. In the cities of Boston, Philadelphia, New York, the con-

sumption of crustacea is beyond all belief. And our neighbours in France look on a *mayonnaise de homard* as one of the luxuries of their existence. In fact, lobsters find their way, in these rapid days of travelling, to every part of the civilized world, and, for aught I know to the contrary, the uncivilized world also. At least I can answer for having a hand in a very excellent lobster salad in a pine wood in Russia. The gastronomical treat, as far as I recollect, was caused from the fact of his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias having condescended to travel comfortably from Warsaw to Petersburg, or Dunaburgh to Petersburg, as may be, before the line was opened to the public; and I chanced to become one of the invited guests who joined the directors in a trial trip, not only as regards the safety of the line to convey an emperor, but to ratify by practical proof the rehearsal of a luncheon here and dinners there to refresh his Majesty's inward man *en route*. Thus on our arrival at a small station in the middle of a pine forest we were ushered into a temporary apartment made of planks, for the occasion decorated with flags and flowers, though in winter time or very early spring; for I recollect planks were laid across that we might walk with dry feet from the carriages over the snow; and when I entered my astonishment was great to behold a most *recherché déjeuner*, with attendants in white neckcloths; but far greater was my astonishment at the sight of lobsters and a *mayonnaise de homard*.

Visitors to Billingsgate, at the proper time and season of their greatest demand, cannot fail to be astonished at the enormous amount of business done. While below that wonderful piscatorial commissariat there is indeed sufficient evidence of the commercial business daily transacted; and near at hand may be found the boiling-houses, in which countless thousands daily change their colour.

Our lobster commerce from Norway is very great; indeed, as many as 30,000 at times arrive from the fiords in a single day. And these

lobsters are so much esteemed that we pay from 20,000*l.* to 30,000*l.* annually to the Norwegians for this one article of commerce. They are brought over in welled steam-vessels, and are kept alive after their arrival in wooden reservoirs. As a proof of the number conveyed from Norway alone — a number, of late years, greatly on the increase—I may name a little incident which occurred in the early part of the present century, which sets forth that one of these wooden reservoirs was once run into by a Russian vessel, when some 20,000 to 30,000 lobsters were set adrift, possibly not to enjoy themselves in the poisonous waters of Father Thames.

Lobsters, and, as I believe, for the most part all other crustaceans, can be kept alive after their capture for commercial purposes. Taken from the steamers which convey them to their destination, they are then placed in perforated wooden boxes anchored in some well-selected spot; for the London dealers by no means allow too many lobsters to find their way at once to the market. The supply is governed by the demand, and this demand being in a great measure guided by erroneous ideas as connected with the animal being in or out of season, is, or at least I should imagine must be, most injurious to the trade.

Ireland abounds with lobsters, and welled vessels bring them to the London market at the rate of ten thousand a week. Immense quantities are also produced in Scotland, and I have heard of cargoes of thirty thousand being obtained chiefly from the coast of Lewis and Skye, the value of which to the captors would amount to 1,000*l.*, whereas in the English market the same quantity would bring at least four times that sum. And in proof of the enormous fund of wealth which the sea supplies, even as regards the animal lobster alone, I venture to insert an interesting fact, which I have taken from an article on shellfish, published in the 'Illustrated News.' It arose from a little experiment of a charitable nature which was tried by a gentleman who took a lively interest in the

Highland fishermen, and the results of which he made public. Commiserating the wretchedness which he had witnessed among many, who although anxious to labour were unable to procure work, and, at the same time, feeling that the usual mode of assisting them was based on a mistaken principle, he undertook the establishment of a lobster fishery upon a small scale at his own expense. He expended about 600*l.*, with which he procured eight boats completely equipped and a small smack of sixteen tons. The crews, consisting of thirty men, he furnished with all the necessary fishing materials, paying the men weekly wages ranging from nine to thirteen shillings, part of the amount being in meal. The result of this experiment was that these eight boats sent to the London market in a few months as many lobsters as reimbursed the original cost of the fishing plant. The men and their families were thus rescued from a state of semi-starvation, and are now living in comfort and plenty, having, in addition, the satisfaction of knowing that their present independent condition has been achieved principally by means of their own well-sustained industry.

In the large towns and cities of the United States and Canada, such as Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Halifax, Montreal, &c., the numbers annually caught, sold, and eaten, to say nothing of those destroyed, are beyond all calculation.

'The lobster (*Homarus Americanus*),' says Dr. Gould in his able report of the invertebrata of Massachusetts, 'is the largest of all crustacean animals, and is exclusively employed for food.'

'The largest which has been seen by the Boston fishermen weighed twenty-eight pounds, and those weighing ten or twelve pounds, commonly seen in the markets, are about the average size.'

'Lobsters are caught during the six months of warm weather, and are also taken throughout the year, but no absolute rule is laid down. They are caught about all the islands of the Massachusetts Bay, and in

every lake along the coast. A few contractors manage most of the sales. The largest dealers have three vessels employed during the season. They furnish the apparatus for catching them, and pay a certain sum for each lobster caught. One man will attend to forty pots. He raises his pots each morning and secures his prey. He spends the remainder of the day in catching cod fish.

'To average one lobster each day for each pot is considered tolerable, indeed fair work. In this way 200,000—probably more—are annually taken in the waters of the Massachusetts.

'Nearly one half are disposed of in the Boston market, while all the inhabitants of the seaboard supply themselves abundantly, and the New York market is also principally supplied from the waters of the state about Province Town. Lobsters are sold at about ten cents, or fourpence each, allowing a profit for ten per cent.'

CHAPTER VI.

COOKS IN GENERAL, AND LOBSTERS IN PARTICULAR.

I hold, as I have ever held, firmly to the belief that far more persons are annually killed by cooks than by medical men. And I have held to the idea, and still advocate the fact, that a college for cooks is far more necessary to the health and comfort of mankind than a college for surgeons.

In these days, which are termed the era of progress, civilization, and education, when every one is examined for everything, and expected, moreover, to know something of everything, which at least they fancy they do; in these days, I say, and I say it emphatically, when the arts of war, diplomacy, beurocracy, physic, ay, and stock-brokering, all have their aspirants, who are expected to know that twice six makes twelve, and that the sides of an equilateral triangle are equal, that the Thames is possibly in England and the Hudson in America, and can spell a word of two syllables:

when, I say, the candidates for our future generals, admirals, bishops, ambassadors, doctors of law and physic, and finance ministers, are instructed and supposed to know something of that which they have learnt; when enlightened men of all nations read of art, and love to look on art as they do on the fair face of their best beloved, is it not sad that one of the greatest arts in the world, the culinary art, that of a first-rate cook, is utterly ignored save in theory, though revelled on in fact? Why then, I say, ye gentlemen who live at home at ease, daily finding fault with your matutinal meals, or your evening gormandizing called dining, is it not a scandal which ought and must be remedied, or the mightiest intellects will fail, the most amiable lose their tempers, the world's digestive organs be utterly destroyed, and all happiness here on earth sink into disease?

Take up the 'Times' newspaper any morning and you will therein be enabled to read an advertisement, or ten of them if you choose, from persons offering themselves as professed cooks, most of them backed by some amiable persons giving them characters for honesty, sobriety, cleanliness, and temper; but what about their art? simply nothing. And consequently half the world submits to be poisoned, either from indolence or goodnature, or from economy or utter ignorance of the culinary art. They eat soup by the gallon during the year, from which the murderous, poisoning grease has never been skimmed, underdone and overdone meat and vegetables, all unwholesome, and these professed cooks, professing they can roast and boil—an art that few attain to, but all declare their knowledge of—go forth among the multitude committing slaughter and inconceivable agony. Cooking is an art, I here most vehemently assert, second to no art in its utility to mankind in general, and to refined tastes in particular—an art that increases and infuses the highest benefits to existence, giving health, temper, energy, vitality, power to the human body, energy to the human intellect, the highest and most noble aspirations

to man, and may be obtained in the simplest abode of labour as in the palace of the prince. And I do really think and believe that those who profess the art in whatever degree, and deface the art, ought to be punished as much as any other profession in life is punished for ignorance or want of proper cultivation.

And now let me observe that all the cookery-books, ancient or modern, are culled one from the other. A little more cayenne pepper may be cast in here, a little of cream, oil, or vinegar there. The higher the artist the more delicate the taste; the more knowledge of the palate the more practical means of attaining that which is good and palatable and wholesome. As the foundation of a house forms the groundwork for a good or a bad building, so is the *pot au feu*, or stock pot, the beginning and end—the alpha and omega—of all cookery, whether good or bad. Nothing is more vulgar, nothing more insulting, than that of being asked to take pot luck with any man. There is no such thing in culinary art as pot luck. The *pot au feu* is either a combination of good, wholesome, nourishing stock and aroma from meat or fowl, or game or venison, or all combined, in its finest and most wholesome state, extracted by art and with care, leaving a nourishing jelly (on the top of which the fat or unwholesome portions rise, and which should be carefully removed), from which the stocks of all soups and gravies are made. It is this which is the commencement as the end of a good and healthy dinner. Roasting and boiling are equally meritorious, but rarely attained from the want of care, talent, or experience. And I will ask the reader of these pages on the culinary art and crustacean excellencies, if, on the morning after a copious indulgence of the good things provided at the hospitable board of one who has really a good cook, he has not risen from his bed with feelings of health and elasticity, appetite renewed, digestive powers in order, energy of mind and power of limb utterly the reverse from that which he has experienced when, with a bitter taste

in his mouth, heartburn, digestive organs disarranged, he has awaked from feverish dreams and unrefreshing rest, ill at ease with himself and all mankind, cursing the cook, and, for aught I know to the contrary, cursing the so-called friend who has kindly condemned him to slow poison. No; give me a well-cooked beefsteak, a glass of clear and sparkling bitter beer, a fresh lobster salad, at any artistically arranged little dinner; let me eat, if possible, off a Dresden plate, and drink out of a bright, thin, glass; let me be enabled to see myself in my silver spoon, and wipe my moustache with a snow-white napkin, and I ask for no Lord Mayor's feast, nor would I desire to dine with the President in the White House or the Emperor of the French at the Tuileries.

Ere I conclude with the various receipts necessary for the perfect enjoyment of the lobster as a gastronomical treat, let me quote the following lines. It is necessary to observe them in many instances if you really desire aldermanically to enjoy the perfection of gastronomic indulgence. I quote them from a very able translation of Beranger's lyrical poems—

'To give each dish the relish due,
All talk at table pray eschew:
Strictly forbid all repartee,
In which our sires were wont to see
Such charms—let's have it now no more;
Smart sayings are a downright bore.'

At least till the second course is over, then as many as you like.

Now all the world is aware that some like apples and others onions, many both. The observation is neither elegant nor artistical, but it is truthful; and tastes differ so materially that it would be almost impossible, nay, utterly impossible, to satisfy all. I shall not, therefore, attempt to discuss the question as to who may have been the fortunate individual who has come nearest the mark of universal taste. With rare exceptions, and those consisting in trifling material, all cookery-books are more or less the same. The receipts which I presume to give, therefore, as relating to the lobster, are only such as I personally consider the best; but all receipts

utterly fail in utility if the con-coctor be not an artist. According to reason, in which, for once, the universe is unanimous, you must first catch your lobster. This, of course, by necessity must take place when residing near the briny ocean, the more briny the better. Here and there only is the animal procured in perfection. If you are obliged to buy your lobsters from a fishmonger, it is necessary to do so with great discretion and in accordance with the rules I have laid down for your guidance. A lobster, as I have already observed, covered with parasites is always the best, from the fact of his having long remained undisturbed in deep water. Or per-

haps you may prefer the following plan of obtaining a fresh lobster. The plan is simple, inexpensive, and expeditious. It was thus put in practice. A gentleman once called on his fishmonger in company with a small Scotch terrier. Seeing some live lobsters on the counter, he asked if they were fresh. 'Fresh,' said the fishmonger, 'I should think they were fresh and lively too; only put your dog's tail near their claws and see if they don't hold on.' Tickled at the idea, the dog's tail was instantly presented to a fine lobster's claw, who seized it tightly. Down jumped the dog, bowling, and off he ran with the lobster holding tight.

'Why do you not whistle your dog back, sir?' said the fishmonger.

'You may whistle for your lobster,' replied the gentleman, wishing him good morning.

I shall commence with the lobster salad, which, I humbly opine, is the best and most nutritious mode of discussing this crustacean delicacy. Moreover, I shall give my receipts in the most simple language, even

as regards those I have ventured partially to copy from others, in order that the most inexperienced artist may understand them, which is by no means the case in reference to cookery-books in general. Therefore having caught or possessed yourself of a fine lobster, which you intend to eat, it is of course first necessary to cook it, and here, at the very onset, I find myself differing with various culinary men of dis-

tinction. Generally their advice runs as follows:—

‘Put them alive, with their claws tied together, into the water when boiling hot, and keep it so till the crustacea is done, which, if a pound weight, will take about fifteen minutes, and if larger will require not quite the same proportion of time; for if boiled too long the meat will become stringy. Death takes place immediately.’

Now I am of opinion that this process of cooking lobsters in boiling water was invented by a philanthropist desirous of putting a termination to the animal’s sufferings in the least possible period.

My good friends, philanthropy and gastronomy can never be mentioned together; they are artistically dis-united in every possible manner.

Do we not all suffer? is it not man’s destination on earth, ay, and that of animals also? The bullock is remorselessly punched on the head that we may enjoy a tender beefsteak; the calf is bled to death by slow degrees that our fricandeaus and cutlets may be as white as a fair lady’s hand; partridges and hares, pheasants and woodcocks, are winged and bagged, and left oftentimes to die in the solitude of woodlands; your eels, so say some, are skinned alive, and get used to it. Well, I cannot release lobsters from the generality of gastronomical sufferings of the animal race. They must be boiled, they are bred to be boiled, to become red in the face, to give an upside down turn, to squeak, spread out their tails, and die.

Well, then, I say, a little more or less of suffering is only the difference of extracting a double or single decayed tooth; we all go to the dentist’s, the lobsters to pot, and in that pot let your water be cold. If near the sea, water from the ocean; if inland, water well salted, the time of their remaining in durance commencing from the bubbling of the water. Your lobster boiled or cooked, you propose a salad.

Take eggs in accordance to the size of your salad; let them be boiled as hard as an egg can be boiled, then cooled in fresh, or iced water if possible; extract the yolks, and with

a well cleaned silver or porcelain spoon, the latter preferable, pound them into fine powder. This done, mix the eggs with salt, mustard, and cayenne, and the berry, if it be a female, and some of the selected interior of the animal, to which add vinegar and the most fresh and luscious cream. It avails nothing to tell you of the proportions, that is the mere smattering of a cookery-book, I leave it to the refined taste of the concoctor. If he or she—I hate to call the female sex a she—have a refined or artistical taste, no question that those who eat it will be satisfied. Your sauce well and sufficiently mixed, extract the nutritious flesh of the animal from all parts save the head—though some savans will tell you that the fat of the head or body is, *par excellence*, the best part of the lobster—and cut it in pieces, but not too small. Having a garden, a wife, or a gardener—I should prefer the former—let her proceed to the garden and cut several of the finest and most yellow-hearted lettuces: do not soak them in water, but take leaf from leaf; use only the best, dip them, so as to be perfectly free from dirt or insect, in fresh water—again I say iced water if you have it—and cut in tolerably large pieces, not too large, however, for the most delicate mouth; mix lobster, sauce, and lettuce with a few turns of the spoon, but do not bury it in the liquid, and at the top let a small quantity of the crisp lettuce appear.

There are various other modes of making lobster salads; many prefer oil to cream, and wanting oil or cream, some even use melted butter, and add Worcester and other sauces. But I say use cream *par excellence*. If, however, you prefer oil as very many do, and why not—*chacun à son goût*—then use it; but recollect it must be of the very finest Lucca, and first rate, or you might just as well devour a lettuce and a lobster dipped into a lamp—it is nauseous, unwholesome, detestable, unrefined, disgusting. Butter, melted butter, is far worse. I really disdain all acquaintance with a house which can produce such a salad on the table in presence of intellect or taste. No, my friends, ask me not to

such a meal; I herein publicly decline it.

Lobster salads are also made in moulds, and a very elegant, nutritious, and agreeable addition it is on the supper-table. Hen lobsters are decidedly preferable for this ladylike dish. It is merely placing a lobster salad in a mould decorated with gherkins or beet-root. I have seen the leaf of the rose d'amour added in refined houses. Let it be well frozen and turned out of the mould only a short time previous to being placed on the table. This dish, in all respects to be approved of, should be prepared by a skilful hand.

A *mayonnaise*, more or less, comes under the denomination of salad, as it ought always to be garnished with the most crisp and freshest of lettuce, not cut too small, an error which many ignorant cooks fall into. The best sauce is thus produced: Put a quarter of a pint of melted aspic upon ice in a stewpan; which keep whisking until it becomes a white froth; then add a half-pint of salad-oil or cream, and six spoonfuls of Tarragon vinegar, by degrees, still whisking till it forms a white smooth sauce. Season with salt, pepper, and a trifle of sugar at discretion, whisk it altogether, and serve. This sauce is poured over the lobster garnished with the lettuce leaf, and is more delicate than any other. You may dress it to any flavour you like, and in a moderate temperature it will keep.

Next to a lobster salad, I prefer to discuss the crustacea in curry. It is a dish which requires art and attention, though simple in detail. But the most simple, both as regards food or dress, is for the most part the highest refinement of taste and elegance, whether we treat it gastronomically, or in the every-day walk of life. Queen Victoria does not, I believe, like lobster curry. The Empress of the French, or the Emperor of all the Russias, save when in the Isle of Wight, could scarcely have enjoyed it, as it is to be enjoyed, with Isle of Wight or Devonshire cream as the foundation. The best lobster curry I ever ate was at the Marine Hotel, Ventnor—I wish I was there now: but having

had some conversation with the cook, while smoking a cigar one bright summer morning in the garden of that matrimonial hostelry, which commands one of the finest sea views in Europe, I discovered that the excess of excellencies attained was created by error or chance, as are many other excellencies; that is to say, chance enabled him just to commit the act to perfection.

Curry, a stomachic reviver, is thus produced: Lay the meat, not too small, in a pan, with real gravy and cream at discretion—following the rule of art and taste—which if it be real art and good taste cannot fail. The excellence of any dish depends upon this and the high class of the material used; bad curry-powder; and stale lobster, with thin cream, cannot possibly produce the desired effect. Then rub with butter two teaspoonfuls of curry-powder, if not powerful, three, and half the quantity of flour; put them into a pan and simmer for an hour, adding a *soupeçon* of cayenne and salt. Half a glass of first-rate sherry or Madeira will add to the aroma. A lobster curry, may, however, be excellent without the addition of any vinous or other excitement. Some add mace and lemon, and perhaps they are right. If so, I am wrong; I eschew them.

All lobster curries are based, that is to say, produced in excellence if the material be good, the groundwork being a fresh lobster, good thick cream, and first-rate curry-powder; with the hand of art to mix.

We have also lobster risoles, stewed lobster, fricasee of lobsters, roast lobster, stewed lobster patties, potted lobsters, croquettes of lobster, gratin of lobster, lobster sauce. For the most part, the production of these dishes come within, or ought to come within, the talents of the most humble individual presuming to call himself or herself a cook. I shall therefore only dwell on the mode of roasting a lobster (which is not generally observed, though productive of much excellence), and lobster gratin—a very meritorious and *appétissant* indulgence if produced by the hand of an artist; as is also the *mayonnaise*.

To roast a lobster, it must be taken from the pot when half boiled; butter the shells, having carefully preserved them; lay the fish before the fire, and baste it with the finest and freshest butter till it froths. You may add a trifle of cayenne and Worcester sauce, if your stomach approves and your taste says yes.

A gratin of lobster is a far more artistical dish, requiring considerable genius, thought, and consideration to make it presentable at a table where refinement of eating takes the place of gluttony or the mere satisfying the appetite, while beauty reigns at the board, and conversation vies with the sparkling champagne. It may be thus produced. I need scarcely again say that it is absolutely necessary to procure the finest and freshest of lobsters when possible, as no art can produce in perfection the object to be attained without good material to work upon. Having your lobster, cut it in half, detaching the head from the body; take out all the meat and save the shells; cut the meat into slices, then put a teaspoonful of chopped eschalots in a stewpan with a piece of butter the size of two walnuts; pass them a few minutes over the fire; add a teaspoonful of flour well mixed, half a pint of milk, and stir over the fire, boiling about five minutes; then add the lobster, which season with a little cayenne, salt, chopped parsley, and essence of anchovies; set it again upon the fire, stirring until boiling, then stir in the yolk of an egg; take off the fire, fill the shells of the lobster, sprinkle bread crumbs over it with a little butter; put in the oven twenty minutes, and serve: to give it a nice colour use salamander. I must however suggest that no one sit before this dish without care and power of abstaining. Moreover, never attempt it without a napkin and finger-glass: touch it with your finger, and fail to wash that finger, and, like the gallant soldiers after a battle who are found by some means or another to have lost the trigger finger, you may suffer.

Lobster sauce, generally used as an accompaniment to turbot and salmon in England, though apparently very simple, requires art:

there is, believe me, great art in simplicity—would that the world at large could learn it!—if not that, at all events they may be enabled to make lobster sauce. Put melted butter, the best of butter of course, into a stewpan, at discretion; cut up a small young lobster, not too small. When the melted butter is on the point of boiling, add the lobster and butter, and stir till the butter is well melted; season with a little essence of anchovies, the juice of half a lemon, and a quarter of a teaspoonful of cayenne pepper; pass it through a tammy into another stewpan, and add more flesh of the lobster; a little cream and the spawn of the lobster is a great addition. Serve very hot.

One word in conclusion, or I should rather desire to add a letter written by one no less celebrated for his gastronomical theory, than for his wide-world reputation for that theory. That he was a practical artist, in accordance with my humble ideas of the position the art should attain, I confess I never gave him credit for. I knew him well, and well recollect meeting him on one occasion at Constantinople, at the close of the Crimean war.

‘Still here,’ I remarked, ‘and the army on their way home: what detains you in the East?’

‘The quails,’ was his brief reply.

‘Quails?’ I said.

‘Yes, the quails—Eastern quails; this is the very season, and no man having the opportunity should neglect spending a week with them. Do me the honour to breakfast with me, and judge personally as to their merit.’

I did so. Before us was displayed half a dozen fat quails cooked to perfection (a totally different bird from the American quail, which are highly distinguished in their way), and one bottle of *cloche vogueau*, of splendid aroma; and, believe me, Soyer and the writer of these lines had a breakfast fit for Lucullus. But I see Madame Soyer has a taste for lobsters, and the worthy professor proceeds to give her directions for their preparation. A moment, however, while I relate another little incident, which then and there occurred. I chanced to remark *en*

passant during that *tête-à-tête* in the city of the Sultan—a remark which occurred as do many others in life's career, from the fact merely of seeing the American flag flying from the mast-head of a man-of-war, then at anchor in the Bosphorus. 'There,' said I, 'that flag belongs to a gastronomical nation, and a noble nation, too, as regards their institutions generally—barring their railway travelling, the most odious in the world. However, they make up for it; they know how to dine, and dine well. Moreover, they go on the system of doing unto others as they wish to be done by, consequently their hospitality to strangers is great.' I recollect passing a few days at Baltimore: wonderful gastronomy to be found there, I assure you, Monsieur Soyer,—canvas back ducks which melt in your thorax, leaving exciting aroma; wild turkeys *aux truffes à merveilles*, and quails, but not such quails as those we have just discussed; yet they are very presentable birds: a *suprême de cailles*, in fact, is by no means to be sneezed at: one may eat copiously without ill effects, or impairing the digestion, or heated dreams. Champagne is their natural accompaniment, if still, and not too much iced. There is, however, another meritorious dish I desire to bring to your notice, and so doing, permit me to ask of your practical knowledge of gastronomy, as to why the lobster might not be cooked *en chemise*, or *en pat à la Maintenon*—in its naked or unshelled state, that is to say at the period of its casting its shell? The dish to which I allude, as being, I fancy, peculiarly distinguished at Baltimore as at Philadelphia is the 'terrassin.' Now the terrassin, as far as I could learn, belongs to the family of turtle—so admirable an addition to civic gastronomy, and who but will admit its rare qualities, its many rare gastronomic virtues? It is, in fact, a diminutive turtle in size and appearance, but grand in itself; admitted as one of the most agreeable guests of Philadelphian and Baltimorian supper-tables. An animal, in fact, which submits with all the sublime

fortitude of the lobster to be boiled alive for man's enjoyment, though I fancy the process is by no means agreeable. Being boiled, divest them of the outer skin and toenails, then boil them again until they become quite tender, adding a handful of salt to the water in which they are boiled. Being perfectly tender—a *sine quâ non*—take off the shells and clean the terrassins with much care, removing the sauce bag and gall without breaking. Then cut the meat and entrails into small pieces, and put them into a saucepan, adding the juice which has been exhausted while cutting up, but no water; season with cayenne and white or black pepper, artistically adding a quarter of a pound of good mutton to each terrassin, and flour to thicken with discretion. After stirring a short time, add four or five tablespoonfuls of cream, and half a pint of good Madeira—recollect, good; if not to be had, the best of sherries—and serve hot: a silver dish with a lamp under it for preference.

'Well,' replied Soyer, 'the dish, as you describe it, must undoubtedly be excellent; but, alas! we have no terrassins in England.'

'As things progress we may live to see the Atlantic crossed in balloons, and then hurra for a *suprême de terrassin*! Meanwhile, why not try a denuded lobster, that is, one which has just cast off his armour? I have heard a first-rate cook say that the animal was too thick to admit of being made tender; but why not serve him *à la terrassin*?'

'Agreed,' was the reply: 'when we meet in England, I will serve one *à la surprise*, and it will be a surprise, commencing a new era in lobster gastronomy.'

We parted, alas! to meet no more in this world. And the *surprise de lobster* awaits the skill of another artist. And now, my good friends, I give you poor Soyer's hints to his Eloise, and with it take my leave.

'DEAR ELOISE,—To you who are so fond of lobsters, the following receipts will, I am sure, prove most valuable.

'On all occasions endeavour to buy one heavy in proportion to its

size; or, perhaps, *entre nous*, you would prefer to wait until a friend presents you with one.

'The lobster is a shell-fish continually before our eyes, and only looked on as an article of food. Nevertheless it is one of the wonders of the creation.

'A creature destitute of bones, yet furnished with a stomach capable of digesting the hardest substances, even its own shell, which it throws off like an old coat when it becomes too tight: without blood circulating through its body, yet strong and active. It is, in fact, one of the wonders of the mighty deep, that we cannot regard but with awe and veneration. Yet the principal interest it excites is as a gas-

tronomical addition for man's appetite.

'They are without question a very nourishing aliment, and by many are supposed to have particular seasons. When out of season, it is easily known by the berry or spawn being very large, in fact, at the period of hatching.

'When in perfect season, and fine flavoured, it should have no spawn, or very little, under the tail; and the body when squeezed should be almost hard, not elastic. Great care should be taken in the boiling; if overdone, they become tough—a word, the spelling of which, or I should say the power of not spelling it correctly, lost a youth a commission in the British army.'

A PIC-NIC UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

URING the year of grace 1863 the quietude of the little village of Wycombe-super-Mare was disturbed by the arrival of sundry families from London. Lodgings were at a premium; fat landlords gloated over unfortunate stray visitors, who were basely pent up in miniature rooms, for which they paid the largest possible prices. The owner of the bathing-machines (there were but three in all Wycombe) comported himself like a Turkish sultan. Secure of his fees, he smoked his pipe at leisure, drove as many as six unlucky females at once into each compartment, and actually compelled Paterfamilias himself to draw the machines out of the water when the tide advanced; Paterfamilias esteeming it quite sufficient favour to be allowed the use of that caravan for his wife and family, for whom, of

course, it was only his duty to act as galley slave.

Now amongst those who served to upset the peaceful monotony of this primitive little place, a certain Dr. Greatheart played a prominent part. He was a man of some reputation, had a great many letters attached to his name, which I never could clearly decipher, but which generally meant, I believe, that he was some kind of a 'fellow.' F.R.S.—'Fellow of the Right Sort;' F.L.S.—'Fellow of the Loving Soul,' &c., &c.; all very complimentary designations, showing how highly the good doctor was esteemed by mankind. Mrs. Greatheart, like her husband, was of the race of Anakim, both mentally and physically; her virtues were so many and so diversified that if I ventured to describe them, I should be set down at once as a base flatterer. Suffice it to say that her mind embraced botany and sewing-machines, sanitary societies and scarlet flannel petticoats for the young Anakim, who, in spite of their mother's literary predilections, were as complete a contrast to the little Jellabys as one could well wish to see. Intensely jolly were the Greatheart children; they swarmed about Wycombe in their serge yachting suits, noisy, ruddy, and happy, looking as if they had never known London's smoke or London dissipations.

Besides the Greathearts there was another family of medical pretensions. Dr. Pips was the very pink of London doctors; his reputation professionally was immense. No man better versed than he in the 'Materia Medica' could be found throughout the vast metropolis. Then he was such a charming man to consult; wrote such neat prescriptions, discovered in his patients so many and such alarming symptoms; his very spectacles had a mild, benignant expression, which seemed to say, 'Confide in me: your cure is certain.' Dr. Pips abroad and Dr. Pips at home slightly differed. If to his patients he was as the lion, as the very chief amongst medical men, to whose opinion all must bow, in his own domestic circle he was most lamb-like. In entering his own door his greatness dropped from him as a garment, and with beautiful humility he allowed himself to be petted and taken care of by his portly wife as if he were the veriest live doll in existence. Dr. Pips had no children with whom to enjoy the sea-breezes, but in lieu thereof he was always closely followed by a young Italian, who had been confided to his care as medical pupil. Now, does not this

present a fine opening for a little romance? A young Italian, of course, should be dark-eyed, passionate, romantic; he should, in duty bound, fall desperately in love with Kate Greatheart, the eldest of the Anakim, a fine-looking girl with a wealth of golden hair which ought to have sufficed to set the hearts of all Italy in a blaze, could they have been subject to its charms, and which yet did not stir a single sluggish flame in the placid breast of Enrico Buoncini. This young man was altogether a take-in; he had not even dark eyes; he was fair, or rather would have been, had his complexion been clear enough, possessed cane-coloured hair, and a moustache to match, which never grew beyond the merest stubble. He had a *penchant*, or rather, two—a very large one for science and a small and languid one for a Miss Adeline Mallowton, of whom more hereafter. It is probable that the latter mania would have quickly died a natural death had it not been stimulated by the stratagems of a rival, who, in the person of Frank Greatheart, a lanky youth just emerging from schoolboyism, laid siege to the young lady's affections with far greater assiduity.

Then there were the Greens—good, ordinary people; not very energetic, children rather spoiled; but as they were delicate specimens, it was perhaps excusable.

Lastly—we beg their pardon most humbly for not placing them first in our enumeration of the visitors at Wycombe-super-Mare—came the Mallowtons—such grand people! such very grand people!!

They brought down their carriage and pair of greys, their two governesses, their two menservants and their gorgeous array; and the natives of Wycombe were considerably impressed.

Now this long description of component parts amounteth to one thing, namely, a pic-nic, which was arranged by the united families of Greathearts, Pips, Mallowtons, and Greens, and which came off one Saturday in the month of August, 1863.

It was a lovely morning. For details of the sunrise consult any poet

you may have at hand; for details of the preparations consult the flurkeys who looked on, and the female servants who worked hard packing hamper after hamper with eatables and drinkables of every kind till all was ready, including the croquet-box, which, with a strap round it, had a prominent place in the 'chay,' now standing ready to convey some of the Greatheart party to the scene of action. One division, under the command of the doctor, was to walk—Frank, indeed, had already set forth, hoping to be before Buoncini in offering himself as escort to the charming Adeline. He had provided himself with an amber heart of large dimensions, which he intended to present privately to the young lady, with an appropriate speech, composed with great care at least a week beforehand.

Mrs. Greatheart, her eldest daughter, and a weakly cousin, prepared to set out in the 'chay.' The weakly cousin, who rejoiced in the name of Arabella Jane, has not been before mentioned, partially on account of her insignificance—which she really could not help, poor thing!—and partly because she was so extremely nervous that it was thought best to keep her as quiet as possible on all occasions. I hardly like to write about her, for fear, through some magnetic influence, she should discover that she was dragged before the gaze of an unsympathizing British public. The effect on such a delicately-strung system might be direful.

The vehicle is in motion. 'Hur-ray!' cries the youngest Anakim from the nursery window, not old enough to be of the party. 'Pray stop!' pleads Arabella Jane; 'I've forgotten my sal-volatile.'

'Never mind; you are much better without it,' says Mamma Greatheart. And the 'chay' rolls on.

Alas! who would have thought that brilliant sunrise to be nothing better than a little gay deceiver? Clouds are gathering, and Mamma Greatheart has some misgivings as to the safety of her walking flock. She consults the driver, and his reply does not altogether ease her mind.

'It du look tempesterified,' says the proprietor of the one-horse chay. 'P'raps it won't be nothink much, ma'am.'

Arabella Jane mentally prepares herself for violent inflammation of the lungs, and draws her cloak closer round her, shivering at the thought.

'Suppose we stop at Dr. Pips', to see whether they have started,' suggests Kate Greatheart; and that accordingly was done. Dr. Pips was in high spirits; an Honourable Mrs. Somebody had just driven over from a distance to consult him about the distressing symptoms of an *attaque de nerfs*, and for him the clouds seemed to have a golden lining that day. Buoncini was still lingering about, and Kate, who felt a sympathy with her brother which he would not allow her to express, inquired if the Miss Mallowtons were walking on.

'They—are—so,' said Enrico, pronouncing every word with the utmost care, for he prided himself on his English accent. 'They—are—gone—before. I—would—have—united—with—them, but—I—have—one—great—tooth—which—I—need—to—envelop—in—soft—wool; for—that—I—renounced.'

Arabella Jane looked compassionate. She thought Buoncini must have toothache, and she bent forward.

'If you fill a flannel bag with salt, and make it very warm by the fire, and then put it to your cheek, it will perhaps relieve the pain, Mr. Buoncini. I often find it most comforting.'

Buoncini opened his eyes very wide, and stepped back in utter astonishment. Kate burst out laughing.

'Oh, Arabella! you'll kill me talking about remedies; it is a fossil tooth that he is going to pack up, not one out of his own head.'

There was no time to pursue the subject: finding Dr. Pips in such good cue, Mrs. Greatheart gave the order to proceed.

'Oh, dear!' shrieked Arabella Jane, 'we shall be upset if we turn so sharply round the corner. How my heart does beat!'

'Pray be careful, Miss Arabella,' cried Dr. Pips, benignantly waving his hand from the verandah. 'Above all things, do not excite yourself. I would not answer for the consequences.'

Mrs. Greatheart quickly told her charioteer to drive on; and Arabella's fears were diverted in another direction by the appearance of some large-horned cows, who would certainly, she thought, toss chaise, horse, and everything else in the air.

The various families were to meet at a ferry, which they purposed crossing, and then they were to encamp on a cliff called by the young Greathearts 'Mount Parnassus.' Nothing remarkable happened on the way to the rendezvous, except that little Ada Mallowton fell headlong into a hole full of wet gravel, and her pretty pink grenadine, new for the occasion, was dyed with stains of the darkest hue. Mrs. Mallowton arrived at the same moment in her carriage, and the two governesses rejoiced that the influx of people saved them from being visited with her most severe displeasure on the occasion.

Frank, in spite of his immense advantages in starting, had not yet found courage to offer the amber heart, which seemed to be burning a hole in his pocket. The German governess had been close to Adeline's side most of the way, and when a good opportunity was offered by the descent of Fraulein's boot-lace, the lad was too weak to profit by it. He strove in vain to recall the exact words of the speech he had been conning over so carefully, and while he was combating with his nervousness, the precious moment slipped away. In the mean time the clouds gradually thickened; a cabinet council was held by the seniors in a sort of barn, smelling strongly of tar. Mrs. Mallowton established herself on a wooden stool with three legs, and, supported by her governesses, moved that dinner should be taken there and then, and that the whole party should immediately after proceed homewards. The young people groaned inwardly at this arrangement, but dared not

resist openly. They appealed to an old sailor, who evidently thought that sunshine could not be altogether missing amongst so many bright faces. He looked at them, and he looked at his telescope, and from the corner of his eye he peered at Mrs. Mallowton, and then he said he thought the rain would soon be over. So a boat was placed in readiness, and the five Miss Mallowtons stole furtively down to the beach and embarked with Kate and Frank Greatheart before their mamma and governesses well knew what had been decided. Then did Mrs. Mallowton rise in ire and consternation. She rushed to the edge of the water, crying out, 'Oh! mes enfants! mes enfants! they will be drowned; it is all over with them.' Fraulein and mademoiselle joined in the chorus, and Buoncini, disgusted with himself for having again let the good chances fall to his rival, used strong expressions in his own tongue, so that the medley of foreign languages and English lamentations was edifying in the extreme. Of course no accident happened—none ever does when so expected; and the children, landed safely on the opposite shore, toiled up the hill, and had half unpacked the hampers before the old folks arrived.

The spread was exceedingly sumptuous. We do not wish to be tantalizing, so we will not attempt details; suffice it to say that there was everything that could be desired, and plenty of it too. Mrs. Mallowton was installed in the seat of honour—a tin box containing sausage rolls, thereby disappointing some of the juveniles who had a weakness for that kind of pastry, and who now felt it hopeless to expect the case to be opened. At this juncture the party was increased by the arrival of a long-looked-for individual, held in high repute by the Mallowtons and Dr. Pips. This illustrious personage was no less than the Hon. Osborne Fitzosbert, a star of the first magnitude, who had just disembarked from his yacht; his magnificent attire being somewhat sullied by the roughness of the waves. This rather revived the drooping spirits of some of the

party. Adeline Mallowton shut her umbrella immediately; Arabella Jane looked fascinating in the hopes of an introduction; while Kate Greatheart, who knew the Honourable of old, and enjoyed teasing him, handed him a smoking hot potato, which burnt his fingers excruciatingly. He bore it with patience, however, and took his revenge on Frank, who had at last summoned courage to slip the amber heart under a slice of pigeon pie, destined for the charming Adeline. The Honourable Osborne perceived the manoeuvre, made an ingenious exchange of plates, and the next day confronted poor Frank at Wycombe church, the heart dangling at his watch-chain. Frank was in agonies all the time of the service, and failed to profit by it as he should have done. When it was over the Honourable told him that the heart had been presented to him by a young lady at the pic-nic. Frank believed it, and his hopes were blighted. But we are anticipating: the pic-nic party had now an opportunity of admiring a gently falling rain, which threatened not to be 'gentle' very long, and which in the mean time was providing every dish with a very undesirable kind of sauce.

'The only thing is to sit still,' quoth the Honourable Osborne Fitzosbert, 'to prevent the grass from getting damp under us;' and he stuck to this brilliant idea with great pertinacity, getting well waited on for the sake of his handsome face and aristocratic bearing.

As for Dr. Pips, he bore the inclemency of the weather with the greatest fortitude. He sat under his wife's umbrella, quietly eating the breasts of two fowls with which Mrs. Pips had supplied him. 'I think, dear Albert, you will feel the better for a little champagne,' Mrs. Pips had been saying. The doctor had taken her advice and his spectacles shone more benignantly than ever.

The Mallowtons had drawn closely round the tin box from which issued the flats of their chief; they shut themselves out from the gaze of human eye, with a barricade of umbrellas, and confabulated. What

was the purport of their discourse we know not. Perhaps in this complete retirement Mrs. Mallowton may have dispensed sausage rolls from her tin box to a chosen few: we cannot say. From time to time, comestibles from without were handed in and quickly disappeared; but to the world at large *la famille Mallowton* was a dead letter. Suddenly was heard a sound as of a whirlwind; the Greathearts, Pips, and Greens look round in alarm; the Honourable Osborne Fitzosbert nearly chokes in bolting his fourth glass of champagne. It is the five Miss Mallowtons who are shaking down their crinolines preparatory to taking flight with the parent birds. The covey has passed; the Mallowtons are gone; every one breathes more freely, and the dinner finishes amidst universal chattering.

What they were doing at the weather office, I do not exactly know; the wrong tap must have been turned somehow, for by this time the rain began to pelt. The great Greathearts themselves felt they must beat an ignominious retreat, and now the move was general. Three men-servants were left to pack up the knives and forks and to drink the half-dozen of sherry which still remained uncorked; the latter duty was most efficiently performed, with the usual results. On plodded the pic-nic party, sinking ankle deep in the wet sand, but still plucky and cheerful.

In due time they were once more seated in the ferry-boat, but it was sad to think that the extreme gallantry of the Honourable Osborne would not allow him to cross with the ladies for fear of being overweight. When at last he joined them, his conversation was very erratic. Goodnatured young man! Can we sufficiently admire the disinterested spirit which prompted him to assist the footmen in their attacks on the wine? Was it his fault when those worthies mistook him for one of themselves and ordered him to lend a hand with the hampers? The Honourable ignored this part of the story, when he afterwards related how these individuals called each other by their master's

names, and how he was unwittingly initiated into some of the mysteries of that wonderful 'Life below Stairs.'

His spirits were high; he was seized with a vehement desire of talking French, which he did with remarkable fluency and inaccuracy, enhanced by a thick heavy utterance, till Mrs. Greatheart had compassion on this hopeful scion of the Fitzosberts, took him under her charge, and forced him to behave properly. To every one's astonishment on landing from the ferry-boat, they beheld Mr. Mallowton's carriage—the horses and coachman shining beautifully with moisture—by the little inn where they had put up. As the other travellers neared it, Mr. Mallowton himself appeared at the door of the 'Sail and Anchor,' to explain that 'Mrs. Mallowton was afraid the dear girls would take cold if they sat down in their wet things, so they were walking home, and would then go to bed immediately.' Poor man! could he have seen his wife and children at that moment, he would not so cordially have pressed Dr. Pips and Mrs. Green, with as many of their party as could squeeze in, to avail themselves of his carriage. The wind was very high and viciously disposed; it coveted Mrs. Mallowton's best silk umbrella; that lady was as determined as Boreas; it turned out a regular wrestling match in which the wind got the best of it. His fair antagonist was literally blown into the sea; in utter despair she let go, and the victorious wind triumphantly carried the umbrella far from her reach. Mrs. Mallowton was a strongminded woman, but defeat is trying, and her spirit was thoroughly cast down. She was too exhausted to complain any more, and the rest of the weary way was made in complete silence by all her party. Dr. and Mrs. Greatheart having successfully packed off their children and Arabella Jane, at last started for home themselves, in a cab, despatched from Wycombe to their relief. Was it their extreme worth that broke down the vehicle, or had the Honourable Fitzosbert, to whom they had offered a seat on

the box, been talking French to the driver? Whichever it was, the springs suddenly gave way, coming through the floor of the cab in the most unlooked-for manner. 'Je n'ai upset pas,' stammered the Honourable, peering vacantly through the cab window, but upset he was, and in more senses than one. He walked by the side of Dr. Greatheart, stopping every few steps to converse; but even this had its advantages, for it was perhaps owing to the young man's incapacity for taking care of himself that the doctor and his lady reached home thoroughly warm, and in no condition to derive ill effects from the events of the day.

The delights of the blazing fire that greeted them, the cheering cups of tea they drank, no pen can describe with justice. 'Je enjoy me beaucoup,' sang out the Honourable,

and the rest agreed with him. I never heard that any one was at all the worse for their wetting; indeed, Arabella Jane's constitution received on that day such a thorough shaking that she became quite a new creature, and never ailed anything ever after; as to sal-volatile, she left the bottle behind her at Wycombe and it was not again heard of. Frank suffered the most; the misadventure of the amber heart preyed deeply on his spirits for nearly a whole day; but as he has since devoted himself to many young ladies in succession, we may hope the wound was not very deep. Even the Mallowtons, much victimized and much enduring as they were, derived some satisfaction from their excursion, for they never tired of detailing the adventures of this Pic-nic under Difficulties.

London Editors and Political Writers.

NO. III.

THE 'MORNING HERALD,' AND THE EARLY DAYS OF 'THE TIMES.'

THE 'Morning Herald' was established in 1780 by a discontented writer in the 'Morning Post,'—a man who obtained no little notoriety in his day. This was the Rev. Henry Bate, afterwards the Rev. Sir Henry Bate Dudley, rector of Ferns, chancellor of the diocese of Ferns, and a justice of the peace. The career of this man was remarkable. He was the son of a clergyman at Worcester, and was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, after which he was ordained, and obtained a small living in Essex. The duties of marrying, burying, baptizing, catechizing, and preaching in an intensely Boeotian district were not much to his mind, and he soon threw them up, and came to London about 1775, to lead the life of a man about town. About that time the newspapers indulged as freely in personal and private comment as the New York papers were in the habit of doing before the war began—a fact which should not be forgotten when we read of the many prosecutions for libel which the publishers were called to undergo. Bate, who had thrown off the clergyman's gown with his parish, came up to the metropolis, and at once attached himself to what Sir Walter Scott would have called the Light Horse of literature. An engagement on a newspaper as the chronicler of the fashions and follies of the day seems to be a strange descent from the grave duties of a parish priest, though it has been paralleled by a somewhat similar case in our own day; and it doubtless afforded Bate an opening into that round of frivolities which is now called fast life, which he seems to have been from the first eager to obtain. Here he did his work as caterer for scandal with too much zeal, for a paragraph reflecting on the character of a lady was of such a nature as to call forth a champion on her behalf in a Captain Storey, who challenged the ex-clergyman. Mr. Bate had enough

of the clergyman left in him to wish to avoid this mode of giving satisfaction; and he sent a message to the captain assuring him that the offensive paragraph was inserted without his knowledge. This was probably true; for though editors are properly held responsible for all that is published under their care, it is impossible but that a paragraph will now and then steal through unobserved; and in former days there was less supervision than now. Whether true or not, the explanation met no credence from the enraged captain, and on an accidental meeting between the parties in the street in the month of January, 1777, high words ensued, and both became so incensed that they resolved to settle their dispute at once. Dispensing with all preliminary formalities, even to the presence of seconds, they adjourned to a tavern, called for pistols, and, being shown by an accommodating waiter into a room, they shut the door, and proceeded forthwith to the duel. The pistols were discharged on both sides without effect, on which they drew the swords which were then an indispensable portion of a gentleman's walking equipment. Both were soon wounded, and Mr. Bate's sword bent from a stroke on the captain's breast-bone. The parson was thus naturally disarmed, but the captain, on perceiving his plight, courteously allowed him time to straighten it, which he was proceeding to do by pressing his foot upon the bent part, when the crowd assembled outside the door thinking the parties had done enough for honour, broke in, and parted the infuriated combatants.

Whether Mr. Bate wrote the libel on Captain Storey's friend or not, there is no doubt at all of his cognizance of another libel which appeared in the same paper about three years after this against the Duke of Richmond. This was the Radical duke, the uncle of Fox, the advocate of universal suffrage and

annual parliaments, but who afterwards took umbrage at his not being accepted as the Whig leader on the death of Burke's Marquis of Rockingham, and went over to Pitt and the Tories. But in 1780 he was in the full course of opposition, and was as severe an economist as Mr. Cobden or Mr. Bright of the present day. For this he encountered the biting censure of Mr. Bate, who accused him of being in league with the French, of inviting an invasion of the country, and so forth. The duke would not condescend to meet his adversary as Captain Storey had met him formerly, but raised an action against him in the courts of law. The libel was clearly brought home, and Bate was sentenced to an imprisonment of twelve months in the King's Bench Prison; but curiously enough the prison was at that time little better than a mass of ruins, for it had been sacked by the 'No-Popery' rioters a few months before, and Bate's imprisonment was postponed till the gaol was repaired; nor do we believe it was ever enforced. But the trial and the sentence was enough to terminate his connection with the 'Morning Post.' Even in those days, when the liberty of the press was often assailed, and a prosecution for libel was as often the lot of a courageous patriot as of a malignant assailant, the English people drew a distinction between fair, however rough, criticisms on public conduct and unfounded imputations of base motives. No proprietor of a newspaper who had any regard for its character, or even its pecuniary interests, could retain a convicted libeller of this class at its head; and hence we find that soon after the trial Bate's connection with the 'Post' was at an end. But he had found his connection with the newspapers and the position in society it enabled him to assume too pleasant to be given up, and accordingly we find in November of this same year the first number of the 'Morning Herald' making its appearance under Mr. Bate's somewhat ominous auspices.

The future career of this singular person had a dash of romance in it. He contrived so far to ingratiate

himself with a Mr. Dudley, that that gentleman bequeathed to him a large estate on condition of his assuming his name. Having thus come into possession of considerable wealth, the Rev. Bate Dudley bethought him of reverting to his early profession. He bought the patronage of the church of Bradwell, near Maldon, and, intending to present himself at the next vacancy, he laid out several thousand pounds in restoring the church and schools and building a magnificent rectory-house. A man of his stamp was not likely to see any incongruity in a duellist and a libeller, as well as a newspaper editor, becoming a parish priest; but the bishop of the diocese did, and when the living fell vacant, and the new patron issued his presentation in his own behalf, the bishop refused to induct him. A lawsuit ensued, which lasted for some years, and which ended in the fighting parson spending more money, and in not getting the living. But in another quarter fortune was more propitious: he had in the columns of the 'Morning Herald' defended the cause of the Prince of Wales in the many bickerings that took place between that Prince and his irritated father, and that father's responsible advisers. George IV. was never at any period of his life ungrateful, where gratitude involved no sacrifice on his own part. And it happened that he could serve his literary hanger-on without much trouble. He could not, indeed, push him forward, nor even secure him an entrance, into the Church of England: but it is, or rather let us say it was, different in Ireland. There anybody was thought good enough to be a clergyman; and the royal favour was strong enough to secure for this man the rectory of Kilcoran, in the diocese of Ferns, where he was subsequently appointed chancellor of the diocese. In temporal honours he was equally fortunate. He was made a justice of the peace and a baronet; and died at last in the year 1824 in all the odour of sanctity.

From the date of its commence-

ment downward the 'Morning Herald' has never exercised much influence on public opinion. It began, as we have seen, as a Liberal, espousing the cause of the Prince of Wales and his associates, which was then considered to be identical with the progress of civil and religious liberty; and a Liberal it continued to be, though its Liberalism was of a very mild type, till the great year of Conservative reaction, when Sir Robert Peel took office, in 1834; when the Whigs, to oust him, formed their famous Lichfield House compact with O'Connell; when the Conservatives, to beat the Whigs at their own weapons, and to deepen that current of reactive feeling which had begun to flow, established newspapers in almost every market town of any pretensions throughout the country; and as their central organ they secured the 'Morning Herald.' Under its present management it probably exercises greater influence, is oftener quoted, and is more looked to for an exposition of the views of the party it has espoused than at any former period of its existence. To recover it from the contemptible position into which it had been allowed to fall must have been no easy task. Its name had become synonymous with whatever was stupid or dull, and that dullness was not always respectable. For some time it had affected a certain amount of liberality in its opinions, and it became the vehicle through which Mr. Montagu Taylor, an amiable man, but a somewhat prolix and tedious writer, promulgated his theories, that then had the grace of novelty, on the wickedness of capital punishments—a rebound from the unnecessary and even wanton bloodshedding for minor offences in which our statute law at one time abounded. But about the time of the Reform Bill the 'Morning Herald' became decidedly Conservative, or, as O'Connell phrased it when he enumerated the various schemes by which the party with Sir Robert Peel at their head hoped to return to power, 'They purchased that wretched rag the "Morning Herald."' From that time its management was of the most slovenly description: no

care nor pains was taken in its editing: it floated on the sea of existence like a waterlogged ship, sustained only by its advertisements and the *prestige* of its being a daily London newspaper. Its title to this latter quality was indeed sometimes, and with some justice, denied, for it seldom bestowed any news but that which was gleaned from its contemporaries of the previous day: thus giving point and pungency to a joke of 'Punch's,' embodied in such a dialogue as the following:—

'*First Gentleman*.—I will thank you, sir, when you are done, for a look at the newspaper.

'*Second Gentleman*.—It is not a newspaper.

'*First Gentleman*.—What is it, then?

'*Second Gentleman*.—The "Morning Herald."'

'*First Gentleman* (turning on his heel).—Oh!'

But if there was no news in the body of the paper there were occasionally startling novelties in the editorial columns. In general they might be described as Swift described Archbishop Tenison's sermons—'hot and heavy, like a tailor's goose;' but sometimes the heat quite overcame the heaviness. The following leading article, which we print entire, as it appeared, and which proved the climax to a series of mysterious announcements respecting a probable change in Lord Palmerston's ministry about the time of the Chinese war, was probably never surpassed by any in the annals of newspaper literature:—

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON!!'

'A BED OF HEATHER OR A THOUSAND MARKS!!'

'Those were the principles enunciated by the Duellists at Drumclog, who have been immortalized by Sir Walter Scott.

'Right and Wrong!

'Morality and Money!

'Manchester and Canton!

'International laws and errors, public impurity!

'Thus fought Balfour of Burley

and Bothwell, although the descendant of kings.

'The issue of this conflict, if not known to all our readers, can be bought with many other political instructions in its (now) one volume, "Old Mortality."

'These remarks apply to the telegraphed news in relation to the Chinese war, which we give in another column. The details we wait for.'

After this there was no more to be done. The writer who could pen this paragraph, and the editor who could sanction it—if, indeed, they were not one and the same person—had done enough to achieve fame, and nothing more remained than to dismiss him to repose upon his laurels. So it happened that a change soon afterwards took place. The paper passed not only under another management, but into another proprietorship; and hard as the task was—and those only who have mingled in newspaper work can imagine how hard it is in this kind of property above all others to regain a character which has once been recklessly thrown away—yet, as we have already intimated, the work has been accomplished, and the 'Morning Herald' has re-established for itself a recognized place among the forces that move public opinion. Whether it and all the other high-priced papers are not doomed to pale their fires before the penny press is another question; but it is fair to add that, with the single exception of the 'Times,' the 'Herald' is as likely to hold its own as any of its contemporaries.

A projector of the present day has attempted to push into notoriety what he calls a wonderful improvement in the art and mystery of typography, by which a large amount of labour is expected to be saved in having those words of our language that most frequently recur in literary composition cast complete in blocks, instead of having the types that form their component parts picked up letter by letter by the compositor. It is probable the projector did not know that his new plan, in-

genious as it looks, was brought into actual practice about eighty years ago, and that it then utterly failed. Yet the fact ought to be well known in the history of the press, for it was used in the original establishment of the newspaper that is now universally recognized as the first journal of Europe, and its patron was at the head of that family of Walter which is now more closely identified with the newspaper press than the name of Woodfall itself. In the year 1785 Mr. John Walter, the father of the man who made the 'Times,' and who was then a flourishing master printer within the precincts of the City, started a new journal, which in the first instance he called the 'Daily Universal Register.' In the course of the next three years he discovered that there was an inconvenience attaching to this title, arising from the hackneyed use of the word Register, which was often applied to publications of the most miscellaneous nature, and led to all sorts of mistakes. What amount of cogitation was occupied in the new title we are not told; it was most probably the inspiration of the moment, but a moment of supreme luck, that suggested the apt, short, and most original appellation of the 'Times.' But whether under the one title or the other, the new journal did not at first, nor for several years afterwards, give any indications of its future greatness. The elder Walter had no special vocation for newspaper work. To him it was only one of many other schemes he then had on hand; and it would appear that the work was undertaken rather to illustrate the novel style of printing, which he had dignified with the sounding title of 'logography,' than from any taste for political pursuits, that he had engaged in the responsibilities of journalism at all. The small wits of the day ridiculed the scheme, and the columns of his contemporaries indulged in a variety of excruciating jokes at the expense of logography. The logographer held out notwithstanding—for the Walter tenacity of purpose is proverbial; but at last even his stubborn determi-

nation was forced to bow, rather through the conviction forced upon him, that the new process, with all its boasted facilities, was really a slower process than the old one, than to any sense of the ridicule unceasingly poured upon him by his rivals. He altered his system of printing, but he did not alter his system of editing and general management, and the 'Times' remained the same mediocre journal it had begun. Humble as it was, however, it did not escape the usual lot of newspapers in those days. The law of libel was wide, and its ramifications were extensive. In the course of two years Mr. Walter was twice prosecuted for no fewer than three libels on members of the Royal family, and the imprisonment awarded for the first offence was not completed when he was tried for the other two. To imprisonment was added fine; and there was even a hint of the pillory, which was far from being, in those days, the myth it has now become. It was not to be supposed that these encounters with the strong hand of power would be at all to the taste of the respectable City tradesman who had given hostages to fortune in a respectable and flourishing business, and a wife and children, and who felt that he had no special vocation to the perilous paths of political life. It was not surprising, therefore, that when his eldest son had attained to a suitable age he made over to him the sole and exclusive management of the 'Times,' while he confined himself for the rest of his life to the more lucrative and steady gains of the printing-office.

With the advent of the younger Walter came the first impetus of the 'Times' towards that culminating point at the head of the whole press of Europe which it has now so long maintained. This remarkable man seems to have combined all his father's enterprise, perseverance, and tenacity with a high-minded independence, which at that day at least was exceedingly rare, and an aptitude for political journalism which his father never acquired. He early formed his notion of what an English newspaper ought to be,

and he determined to realize it. Independence of party was from the first his motto. The Ministers that in their turn came to rule England received from him, according as he deemed of them, support or opposition; but the opposition was invariably honourable, the support was always disinterested. Whether as friend or foe, he never would cease to be the critic, the monitor, the adviser. But the principles on which he conducted his paper, and the unswerving resolution with which at all hazards he adhered to them, are so clearly set forth in an article which is believed to have emanated from himself, and the document is in other respects so interesting, that our readers will thank us for giving a few extracts from it.

The occasion which called it forth was a curious one. The disastrous results of the expedition to the Scheldt had roused the indignation of the country, and the House of Commons resolved upon an inquiry into the conduct of the Government that had planned and mismanaged it. When in our own times a similar inquiry was undertaken into the conduct of the Crimean war, the matter was referred to a secret committee; but at the period to which we now refer the House of Commons itself had leisure to conduct these inquiries, and never thought of delegating their duties to a committee. But as the committee on the Crimean war was with the consent of all parties made a secret one, so it will be admitted the proposition of the Government in 1810 that reporters should be excluded from the gallery while the inquiry was being conducted was in its way reasonable too. It was resisted, however; and then the Ministers and their friends, instead of urging the impropriety of publishing a grave accusation one day which might be capable of a complete vindication, though the time for that vindication might not perhaps come before several weeks had elapsed, permitted themselves to make an attack upon the newspapers of the day, and those who conducted them, as unworthy of confidence. Windham especially, the

friend and pupil of Burke, went beyond all the rest in offensive attacks upon newspaper writers. He declared that he could see no advantage the country gained by the publication of the parliamentary debates, and added that if the practice had been hitherto tolerated, that was no reason why persons should make a trade of what they obtained from the galleries, amongst which persons were to be found men of all descriptions—bankrupts, lottery-office keepers, footmen, and decayed tradesmen. So much for the reporters. The editors did not fare better at his hands. ‘He did not know any of the conductors of the press, but he understood them to be a set of men who would give in to the corrupt misrepresentations of opposite sides.’ It was against this ill-natured and ungentlemanly attack that Mr. Walter was moved to protest; and in vindication of himself he lets us into an acquaintance with his own high-minded character, as well as into a view of the difficulties with which an editor who was determined above all things to accept no favours and to wear no livery met with in his endeavours to carry out his views. After stating that when he became joint proprietor and exclusive manager in the beginning of the year 1803, and that he then gave his support to the then existing administration of Lord Sidmouth, ‘but without suffering them to repay his partiality by contributions calculated to produce any reduction whatsoever in the expense of managing the concern’ (the contribution of ministerial or leading articles being then a favourite mode of rewarding a party journal, which must have been equally beneficial to the Minister as to the newspaper), he thus proceeds:—

‘This ministry was dissolved in the spring of 1804, when the places of Lord Sidmouth, Lord St. Vincent, &c., were supplied by Mr. Pitt, Lord Melville, &c. It was not long before the Catamaran expedition was undertaken by Lord Melville; and again at a subsequent period his lordship’s practices in the Victualling Department were brought to light by the “Tenth Report of

the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry.” The editor’s father [Logographic John] ‘held at that time, and had held for eighteen years before, the situation of printer to the Customs. The editor knew the disposition of the man whose conduct he found himself obliged to condemn: yet he never refrained a moment on that account from speaking of the Catamaran expedition as it merited, or from bestowing on the practices disclosed in the Tenth Report the terms of reprobation with which they were greeted by the general sense of the country. The result was as he had apprehended. Without the slightest allegation of a single complaint his family was deprived of the business which had so long been discharged by it, of printing for the Customs—a business which was performed by contract, and which, we will venture to say, was executed with an accuracy and a precision which have not since been exceeded. The Government advertisements were at the same time withdrawn.

‘To pursue this matter to its conclusion, before any other topics are introduced, on the death of Mr. Pitt in January, 1805, an administration was formed containing a portion of that preceding ministry which the editor had so disinterestedly supported on his undertaking the management of the paper. It was by one of these that he was directed to state the injustice that had been sustained in the loss of the Custom-House business. Various plans were proposed for the recovery of it: at last, in the following July, a copy of a memorial to be presented to the Treasury was submitted to the editor for his signature. Believing, for certain reasons, that this bare reparation of an injury was likely to be considered as a favour entitling those who granted it to a certain degree of influence over the politics of the journal, the editor refused to sign or to have any concern in presenting the memorial. But he did more than even this: for, finding that a memorial was still likely to be presented, he wrote to those from whom the restoration of the employment was to

spring, disavowing, on his part (with whom the sole conducting of the paper remained), all share in an operation which he conceived was meant to fetter the freedom of that paper. The printing business to the Customs has, as may perhaps be anticipated, never been restored.'

Mr. Walter then proceeds to tell of the positive injuries he sustained from the Government, because he would not pledge himself to give them an indiscriminate support. In the year 1805, when the war between Austria and France was raging, Mr. Walter incurred great expense to obtain information. His object was in great degree frustrated, and his money wasted, by the Government refusing to allow packages addressed to him to be forwarded to the office. 'Foreign captains were always asked by a government officer at Gravesend if they had papers for the "Times." These, when acknowledged, were as regularly stopped, while those for the ministerial journals were allowed to pass.' It seems incredible, at the present day, that injustice so gross would have been tolerated for a single day; but those were the days when public opinion was weak and newspapers had not become that power in the state to which they have since grown. Mr. Walter says that he did complain to the Under Secretary of State, who told him that the matter was under discussion. 'Yet was the editor informed that he might receive his foreign papers as a favour from Government. This, of course, implying the expectation of a corresponding favour from him in the spirit and tone of his publication, was firmly rejected The same practices were resorted to at a subsequent period. They produced the same complaints on the part of the editor; and a redress was then offered to his grievances, provided it could be known what party in politics he meant to support. This, too, was again declined, as pledging the independence of his paper. And be it observed respecting the whole period during which the present conductor has now spoken, that it was from no determined spirit of opposition to Govern-

ment that he rejected the proposals made to him. On the contrary, he has on several, and those very important occasions, afforded those men his best support whose offers, nevertheless, at any time, to purchase, or whose attempts to compel that support he has deemed himself obliged to reject and resist. Nay, he can with great truth add, that advantages in the most desirable forms have been offered him and that he has refused them.'

Some part of Mr. Walter's conduct on one or two of the occasions to which he here alludes savours of a superfine purity, a transcendental assertion of his resolution to be independent. But there is no doubt whatever, it was to this unswerving assertion of his own freedom that not the 'Times' only but the whole newspaper press of England owes the lofty position which it at present holds. The attempt to make the public, and not a party, the patron of a journal was then a new thing in the annals of political literature, and is not even now universally recognized. Newspapers are too fond of moving by the old party measures; proprietors hesitate to budge an inch from the party track; one set of editors see in Lord Palmerston or Earl Russell modes of supernal wisdom, while another set are equally certain that Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli can never go wrong; and neither the one nor the other are awake to the great fact that the English people, taken as a whole, are of no party; that they sway to the one side or the other according as the acts of either attract their favour or rouse their indignation; and that that journal will—other things being equal—command the widest and the most lasting popularity which impartially distributes its applause or censure, not according to the name of the agent, but to the merits of the act. It was in this way the 'Times' rose to an influence that distanced all competitors, and other journals would do well to imitate its example. The cheap press is yet in its infancy. The taste for newspaper reading received a wonderful impulse by the abolition of the stamp, and it is still

extending — still penetrating down to lower and lower strata of society. There is plenty of room for additional penny journals; and we venture to predict the most brilliant as well as the most permanent success for that journal which, disdaining the fetters of party, shall fling itself in generous confidence on the sympathies and the impulses of the great heart of the English people, and recognize Whigs and Tories only as so many instruments of more or less value for working out the national will.

Mr. Walter was the proprietor, and he long continued to be the acting manager, of the 'Times;' but he soon ceased to be, if indeed he ever was, the editor. His shrewd, discerning intellect early saw the need there was for subdivision of labour, if the vast and complicated machine he had set in motion was to work with any tolerable degree of smoothness; and further, that his own special gift lay rather in the mechanical and financial. Now, in the literary department of the newspaper he was no brilliant or attractive writer himself; but no man better knew brilliant and attractive writing when he saw it. It was a natural gift of his, but, like all natural gifts, it required cultivation; and Mr. Walter had to acquire that fine, subtle, almost instinctive tact for judging of other men's excellencies, much as other men have to acquire these specialities through a series of failures. Dr. Stodart was probably not the first of his editors, though he is the first whose name has come down to us, which it has done, by-the-by, in no very dignified way. Dr. Stodart was the son of a naval officer, and after several futile efforts at distinction, and several changes, both in position and opinion, he settled at last as an advocate in Doctors' Commons and as a writer in the 'Times.' His first connexion with that journal was as a letter-writer, a good many letters with the signature 'J. S.' appearing about the years 1810—11; but in the year 1812 he was appointed the principal editor—the man who, subject of course always to the ultimate will of the proprietor, was to give the tone to the political opinions

of the journal. His opinions at that time reflected accurately enough the current impressions of the day. The aristocracy and the bulk of the middle classes were firmly welded together in their determined resistance to Bonaparte and their hatred to the Radicals at home. The effusions of the Doctor were therefore considered by one, and that the largest class of society, to be highly patriotic; while the wits of the minority—how is it, by the way, that the wits are always found with the minority? thus falsifying in politics, at any rate, the old proverb, 'Let those laugh who win'—boasted, not only that his views were wrong, his prejudices powerful, his judgment distorted, but that, over and above all this, his matter was weak and his style pompously heavy. Moore, in one of his political squibs, christened him 'Dr. Slop;' and the nickname, though it does not appear to us of the present generation either very humorous or very suggestive, was considered so appropriate that it stuck to him to his dying day. Clearly an editor with a contemptuous epithet affixed to him, and superseding his own name, would not do for a newspaper that was already aspiring after the first place in the sphere of journalistic life and action. His separation from the 'Times,' however, did not come directly from that quarter at all. As long as the great French war lasted the 'Times' was as forward as any journal to meet the taste of the society of that day by heaping upon the head of the first Napoleon all the abusive epithets which our language could supply. But when the great stake of universal empire had been played for and lost, and the daring gambler was called to pay the forfeit on the rock of St. Helena, then the Corsican ogre grew human again, and allowed men to catch some glimpses of the real character of the man; and a feeling of compassion, not unmixed with admiration, took the place of that mixed emotion of detestation and terror which for so long had held sway in all English hearts. But Dr. Stodart was altogether unconscious of this thaw that was going on in the na-

tional heart; to him Napoleon, caged on his ocean rock, was the same compound of tyrant and devil that he had seemed when at the height of his power. He had gone on abusing him nearly all his life: what reason was there for his learning a new lesson now? But if he did not see the need, Mr. Walter did. Their discordant views soon led to an explanation, and as it was found that reconciliation was impossible, the proprietor, glad probably in heart, suggested that they should separate, though his kind and generous nature would not allow the severance to take place without making some compensation to his old editor for the loss of his position. The arrangement of these matters caused some delay, which was employed by Dr. Stodart in a highly ingenious, if not a very honourable manner. His mortified vanity whispered to him that after all he, the living man, and not the dead compound of types, paper, and presses, was the actual 'Times;' and that, far from Mr. Walter getting rid of him, it was for him to get rid of Mr. Walter. With great secrecy, but, at the same time, with swift industry, he laid his plans; and when at last Mr. Walter had completed his arrangements, and was in a condition to propose to the dismissed editor a pension of a handsome amount, Dr. Stodart was also in a condition to decline receiving any favour from his hands, and to announce that he was about to bring out a 'New Times,' in the following week. The new paper, with its plagiarized title, made its appearance in due course. It was not in the title only that the plagiarism was apparent; the arrangement, the style of the typography, and the general appearance of the new paper were all cast in a style as like the old as the laws of copyright would allow; and no pains were spared to induce the public to believe that the new and not the old newspaper was the genuine 'Times.' It is usual for writers of a certain class to abuse the public to whom they appeal as stupid, and some of them act as if they really believed it; but without an exception these men find, as

Mr. Jenkins in the 'Vicar of Wakefield' confesses he did, that the blockheads are too knowing at least for them. And this was also the experience of Dr. Stodart. Newspaper readers could not be got to believe that the new was the old 'Times;' no, not though they had the familiar hand of 'Dr. Slop' to testify to the averment; and after some years of painful struggle the Doctor took refuge in a judgeship in the West Indies; the paper dropped the false colours under which it had sailed, and from the 'New Times' became the 'Morning Journal.' But the seeds of life were not in it, and a kind of fatality attended it to the last; it became incorporated with another consumptive journal, called the 'Day;' and the amalgamated papers were palmed upon Mr. Eugenius Roche, a journalist who made but a small figure among the brilliant writers around him, but for whom every one of these brilliant writers had a kind word, and who seems to have been an honest, modest, loveable, genuine man. The property of the 'Morning Journal,' on the terms on which he took it, proved his ruin.

In the mean time Mr. Walter, too, had his plans. Before he had made up his mind to get rid of Dr. Stodart, he had cast about for the Doctor's successor. His choice had fallen upon a young, clever, ambidextrous man, who had begun his connection with newspapers by sending them his anonymous written speculations. About the time that Dr. Stodart was advanced to the editorial desk in Printing House Square, Thomas Barnes was writing political and literary essays under the signature of 'Steven,' in Leigh Hunt's 'Examiner.' Walter's quick eye soon caught sight of him, and secured him; but having at the time no more appropriate place for him, he was sent to the reporters' gallery, there to go into training for the higher things that awaited him. And now the time was come. When Stodart left, Barnes was called from the gallery of the House to the editor's room, there to commence a career which it is no exaggeration to say revolutionized the whole news-

paper press. Mr. Barnes had received his education at Christ's Hospital, where he was the school companion of Leigh Hunt, and the connection thus formed between them lasted through life. The warmhearted, impulsive poet and essayist has in his biography left us some general notices of Barnes as a schoolboy, an extract from which will not be unacceptable. After noticing the scholarship of Mitchell, afterwards the translator of 'Aristophanes,' who was also a contemporary, he says:—

'Equally good scholar, but of a less zealous temperament, was Barnes, who stood next me on the Deputy-Grecian form, and who was afterwards identified with the sudden and striking increase of the "Times" newspaper in fame and influence. He was very handsome when young, with a profile of Grecian regularity, and was famous among us for a certain dispassionate humour, for his admiration of the works of Fielding, and for his delight, nevertheless, in pushing a narrative to its utmost, and drawing upon his stores of fancy for intensifying it—an amusement for which he possessed an understood privilege. It was painful in after life to see his good looks swallowed up in corpulency, and his once handsome mouth thrusting his under lip out, and panting with asthma. I believe he was originally so well constituted in point of health and bodily feeling that he fancied he could go on all through his life without taking any of the usual methods to preserve his comfort. The editorship of the "Times," which turned his night into day, and would have been a trying burden to any man, completed the bad consequences of his negligence, and he died painfully before he was old. Barnes wrote elegant Latin verse, a classical English style, and might assuredly have made himself a name in wit and literature had he cared much for anything beyond his glass of wine and his Fielding.

'What pleasant days have I not passed with him and other school-fellows, bathing in the New River and boating on the Thames! He and I began to learn Italian toge-

ther; and anybody not within the pale of the enthusiastic might have thought us mad as we went shouting the beginning of Metastasio's "Ode to Venus" as loud as we could bawl over the Hornsey fields.

'One day Barnes fell overboard, and on getting into the boat again he drew a little edition of "Seneca" out of his pocket which seemed to have become fat with the water. It was like an extempore dropsy. Another time, several of us being tempted to bathe on a very hot day near Hammersmith, and not exercising sufficient patience in selecting our spot, we were astonished at receiving a sudden lecture from a lady. She was in hat and feathers and riding-habit; and as the grounds turned out to belong to the Margravine of Anspach (Lady Craven), we persuaded ourselves that our admonitrix, who spoke in no measured terms, was her Serene Highness herself. The obvious reply to her was, that if it was indiscreet in us not to have chosen a more sequestered spot, it was not excessively the reverse in a lady to come and rebuke us. I related this story to my acquaintance Sir Robert Ker Porter, who knew her. His observation was, that nothing wonderful was to be wondered at in the Margravine.'

The contrast between Barnes, the innocent pudding-faced schoolboy in the quaint 'Blue-Coat' attire of his school, roaming the streets in his long blue coat, canary-coloured small clothes, and without ever a hat to his head; and Barnes the man of the world, the sharp, cynical critic of men and things, the director of the greatest literary enterprise of the day, the wielder of the 'Times' thunder, the man whose society was alternately feared and courted by the wits, the poets, the politicians of the day, is sufficiently striking. After leaving the Blue-Coat School he was sent to Cambridge, where he fully maintained the reputation he had acquired in Christ Church School, being accounted a worthy rival of Blomfield, whose Greek scholarship, aided, it must be confessed, by qualities more decidedly ecclesiastical, raised him

to the metropolitan see. Barnes never had any vocation for the Church, but on leaving Cambridge he entered himself in the Temple, intending to study for the Bar. While thus engaged he commenced the series of letters to which we have already alluded, and which led to his final engagement on the editorial staff. Of course this engagement would not of itself have hindered his professional advancement had he chosen to pursue it. Mackintosh, Talfourd, Campbell, and a host of others that might be named, found the press a convenient stepping-stone to higher things; and there was nothing to prevent Barnes, had he so chosen, from out-distancing them all. But Barnes was above all, and before all, what is commonly called a 'good fellow,' fond of society, addicted—inordinately, it is said—to the pleasures of the table; and while there was good cheer to be made and the wine circulated freely, the graver studies of the law were put on one side. His besetting sin was resolutely grappled with and finally conquered in his later years; but in the mean time the golden opportunities had slipped by, and the man who might have left an enduring mark on the literature of his country has written his name on water; and a few vague traditions of him in the press, and a few timely notices of his more fortunate, but not more gifted contemporaries, are all that remain of Thomas Barnes. Of these traditions there are several highly graphic, though not always reputable. Among the most characteristic, and not over coarse, take the following scene between him and one of his reporters in his later days.

Among the many coercion bills passed for Ireland in former days was one when the late Sir Robert Peel was what his son is now—Irish Secretary. Of course the Secretary had to justify his measure by showing the lawless state of the country, and one of the instances he adduced was a horrible

case of a peasant's hut having been surrounded in the dead of night by a gang of Whiteboys, set on fire, and the little children, as they rushed out of the burning cottage, seized by the savages and tossed back into the flames. 'Then,' said Sir Robert, waxing rhetorical, as he closed his horrible tale, 'then the evil genius of Ireland upraised her bloody hand.' The speech happened to be taken by a reporter whose delicate susceptibilities were rather in excess, and Barnes, looking over the reports in the columns of the 'Times' next morning was horrified to find that the sentence was given, 'Then the evil genius of Ireland upraised her b—— hand.' The reporter was sent for, and an explanation demanded. It was not far to seek.

'Why, sir,' said the reporter, 'I wrote the speech so because I thought the interests of the "Times" and the demands of good taste required it; for you must own, sir, that "bloody" is rather a coarse word.'

'Yes,' said Barnes, restraining with difficulty his boiling indignation, 'yes—yes, I admit that "bloody" is a strong and a coarse word, but still it is sometimes appropriate. For instance, if I were to say you are a bloody fool, it would, no doubt, be very coarse—but it would be very true!'

It is understood that Barnes wrote little or nothing for the paper during the long years that he had the control of it. His judgment, his wit, his shrewd appreciation of the value of an article, his nice and ready sense of the public feeling, his quickness to discern the under-currents of political life, made him far more valuable in giving hints and directions to others than he would have been in writing himself. It may be said of him that Walter's enterprise and liberality, great as these were, would not have been enough to build up the 'Times' if they had not been aided by the shrewd sense and cool judgment of Thomas Barnes.

The Artist in the London Parks :

THE 'CONSTITUTIONAL.'

(See Illustration.)

IS there any young lady living who does not remember with sweet and bitter recollection those dreary matutinal walks of her school-days when she and her companions were marshalled two by two at the door of 'Dothegirls Hall,' like animals issuing from a scholastic Noah's ark? And yet, formal as those 'Constitutionals' were, how many surreptitious amusements you managed to procure by the way under the very eyes of the Argus who was watching you!

'Miss Briggs, what are you stooping for?' cries the shrill voice of Miss Sharp, the under-governess; for at that moment the said Miss Briggs was seen to pick up something from off the pavement.

'Oh! if you please, ma'am, my boot-lace is broken,' answers the young lady, and she secures a bunch of violets, which in some extraordinary way had been dropped by an invisible hand just in the same spot where a little packet of bon-bons was found a few days before.

'Oh, Anna Briggs! I'll tell Miss Sharp of you,' cries the second young lady in the line of march, who has observed the movement and its results. 'What *have* you picked up?'

'Go and tell, tittle-tattle,' answered Anna, haughtily; 'and if you do, I will let Miss Sharp know all about that book of songs that came by post yesterday.' At which threat interlocutor No. 2 shuts up.

Then, again, do you not remember, fair reader, the shameless and scandalous remarks you made upon the passers-by—spoken, it is true, in judicious whispers, so that the acute ear of Miss Sharp, which heard two ways at once, like a horse's, might not catch the sound of your chattering? Did any peculiarity in man, woman, or child escape you? Even the blind man and his dog came in for a share of your *mauvaise plaisanterie*; for did

you not, pretty Emma Ashley, throw a French penny in the dog's tin, and express your wonder for full three days afterwards whether 'old Blindy' could get it changed? And you, Phoebe Brownrigg, will it ever be forgotten how you immortalized yourself when you were a new comer by leaving the ranks and running up to Miss Sharp to ask her permission for you to buy a pennyworth of peppermint 'bull's-eyes,' because—how *could* you have the face to say it?—you had a stomach-ache? And was not every girl in the procession ready to die of laughter and of giggles? And didn't Miss Sharp stop the whole line of you, and give you an energetic lecture, beginning at the two tall parlour boarders in the front rank, and ending at those poor little pairs of female children who walked under the very shadow of the grim presence of authority—tail end of the row? Then, do you not often call to mind the chittle-chattle about your own private affairs: and how you manœuvred to change your position, so that you might walk and talk with your especial favourite and chum Miss Goddard, the amiable Creole, who always said 'Yes, dear,' and 'No, dear,' to everything: how you told her all about your domestic matters: and how papa came home one day, saying he had hit the right nail on the head in 'Spanish Deferred,' and that in consequence he had sent you to a fashionable boarding school, of which you were at that moment a living and sentient unit: how mamma, when a girl, was very beautiful (you were considered very like her, you said): and how papa once threw a beautiful ball-dress out of the window on a wet night because he said it was cut too low: and how you added (still in a whisper, for Miss Sharp's eye is watching you) that, for your part, you *will* wear low dresses when you are married

and have your own way, and won't marry under ten thousand a year, nor anything less than a nobleman, handsome and gallant, like one of Mr. G. P. R. James's heroes? Do you remember all this, fair reader? or does the time make more impression upon you when a few years later you were at a fashionable finishing establishment, where, during a 'constitutional,' you perpetually met that handsome man with an eye-glass in his eye, and heavy mustachios, whom you will probably recognize by glancing at our Illustration? You will also see yourself there, pretty one—the second figure in the group, with a 'pork-pie' hat and coquettish little feather, giving a sidelong glance (you, I mean, not the feather) at the cavalier who, used to pretty girls looking at him, eyes you all very superciliously, while young Henchman of the War Office would give 'almost anything' to be as good-looking as his friend, whose every gesture seems to cry out *Veni, vidi, vici*. By-the-way, were you not a wee bit jealous of that sweetly pretty face in the becoming bonnet who is walking before you? or was the balance of feeling tolerably well sustained by being in immediate contact with a couple so vulgar and *bizarre* as that immediately behind you? Your companion is evidently a happy, unpretending girl, who loves fun better than flirtation, and a scamper over the downs on horseback better than a sentimental conversation with a young Antinous of the Guards. Ah! strangely eventful and never to be forgotten were those days spent when you were just eighteen, at an establishment so appropriately named as 'finishing.' I wonder how much seed for good or for evil in the future of your womanhood was then sown, and whether it sprung into flowers full of fragrance as your own sweet breath, or into nightshade, which poisoned or blighted the future of your life. The question is easier asked than answered; but, judging by the terribly severe countenances of the two duennas in the background, one would say that any rash intruder into the sacred precincts

where you dwell would be incontinently clawed to pieces, or so frightened by the ugliness of the she-dragons as not to risk an entrance into the gardens of the Hesperides.

Or, reader, if you be of the male sex, will you tell me you do not remember your schoolboy days 'Constitutional,' and the ways you had of getting a sly bit of fun by the roadside? Did you not, as you walked along, play 'eggs in the bush' with the illicit marbles in those ample breeches-pockets of yours, and gamble away cake and toffy just as in after life you played whist and *ecarté* in the train going up to London to your place of business in the City? Didn't some of you, too, arm yourselves with little deal catapults made of split firewood, with which artillery you let off pellets of wood at the noses of those dogs who, innocent of your malpractices, came sniffing and trotting at your side? And didn't you—Tom Smivers, *ætat.* ten—carry in your jacket-pocket for weeks a little love-letter written in fine round-hand, in the hopes you might pass near enough to your cousin, Isabella Croker—*ætat.* eleven and a half—to enable you to give her the billet; and, one day, when you essayed to do so, do you remember its falling short of the mark, and its being picked up and given to Mr. Canem (whom you all called 'Cave Canem'), the usher of the lower school, by that thundering big bullying sneak Bill Bowler, whom in after years you thrashed in the Stock Exchange?

In truth, is not the 'Constitutional' of our school-days full of such reminiscences as shadow forth our future actions and conduct? and do they not strangely dimple the memory of childhood with sunshine and shade in the same way that adolescence is afterwards chequered by the lights and shadows of greater events, but which, perhaps, in themselves are not of more importance in the great march of time than those trifling occurrences which turned the dreary formal 'Constitutional' into a walk full of real enjoyment and happiness?

UP IN THE CLOUDS.

A TALE IN NINE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

IN my youth I had a great talent for getting into scrapes. The scrape I am about to narrate is the worst of them. In fact, I select it from the rest, because it is several minor scrapes rolled into one.

In the first place, there was the matter of Miss Crittenden's young ladies.

'Donald,' said my mother—she was born a MacDuff, never forgot her Highland blood, and consequently conferred upon me a Caledonian Christian name—'Donald,' she said, after our early dinner, when my father rose to leave the room and I was about to follow his example, 'you will stop with me. I want to talk to you.'

I didn't like stopping to be talked to—I don't know who does—but there was no help for it. My mother's countenance and tone of voice were too serious to allow me to escape with a joke or a trifling pretext.

'Miss Crittenden has been here this morning,' she said, looking at me with stern inquiry.

I hoped that the slight flush on the cheek which is common to all mankind after a hearty meal would conceal the colour which I felt to be rising hot and fast. It didn't.

'I have nothing to do with Miss Crittenden,' I replied, trying to divert the threatened stroke. 'She's an ugly, ill-natured, cross-grained old maid, and I am very glad I was not in the way.'

'She is neither old nor ugly, Donald. She is only eight-and-twenty, to my knowledge; and, in some lights, and when she is in spirits, you might take her for two or three-and-twenty. I only wish that I could carry my years as well as she does hers.'

Now, as my mother, still young-looking, was a remarkably pretty woman for her time of life, a first suspicion arose in my mind that my honoured parent might be even as other women are—not altogether indifferent to her personal appearance.

'A young woman who supports her father and mother by her own exertions,' she sententiously continued, 'can hardly be called ill-natured and cross-grained.'

The idea of children supporting their parents was also new to me. I had always thought it the duty of fathers and mothers to provide well for their beloved offspring, and, without exactly hurrying themselves, to leave them a handsome independence at their earliest convenience. The other side of the brilliant medal—parents requiring help from their children—had never yet entered my imagination.

'That Miss Crittenden is still unmarried,' my mother went on nailing me down without pity, 'is, I happen to know, her own fault, or rather her own merit. She has declined (I hope only deferred accepting) a most eligible offer, in order to continue her establishment until she has saved enough money to buy an annuity for her parents, whom she does not choose should be a burden on any man who would make her his wife. I believe that she will be able to do so in a couple of years, if all goes well.'

'She is making a very good thing of it,' I said, 'and is feathering her nest as fast as she can. Her number of young ladies is limited to twelve; but, as I count them in church, there are fourteen. With that, at a hundred guineas each per annum, with extras amounting to as much again, she may board and lodge her limited number and make a good profit into the bargain.'

'There is nothing more precarious, Donald, than a school. As Miss Crittenden has room in her house for fourteen pupils comfortably, she is quite right to make hay while the sun shines. If all goes well, she has the prospect of soon settling happily in life; but if all does not go well, she may speedily lose every penny she has earned.'

'And what should prevent all from going well with Miss Critten-

den's Young Ladies' Establishment?" I inquired with affected simplicity, but half anticipating the conclusion at which my mother was fast arriving.

'Your conduct, wicked boy.'

'I know of no such very wicked conduct on my part.'

'You have been writing love-letters—if I may give such a name to scraps of scribbled nonsense: you have been writing silly notes to Miss Crittenden's young ladies.'

'That is not the fact.'

'Perhaps not literally, but it certainly is actually. Of all things, Donald, don't descend to a lie. You have never told me a falsehood yet; don't begin now. Let me have the truth, however bad it may be. You may not have written *letters* to Miss Crittenden's *young ladies*; you have written a very foolish letter to *one* of Miss Crittenden's young ladies. Here is a billet-doux which Miss Crittenden herself placed in my hands, addressed to Miss Emma Hugginson, and signed at full length, "Yours until death, Donald Cartwright," thereby compromising the name of your family.'

'You would not have me write an anonymous letter?'

'I would have you write no letter at all to such a person, under such circumstances. Consider the consequences. If it is once known in the town that Miss Crittenden's pupils correspond by letter with great boys in the Grammar School, that simple and stupid fact will be exaggerated; the further the rumour travels, the worse it will become; and when it reaches the ears of those girls' parents—as reach them it must; the world is so ill-natured—some of them may feel themselves bound to remove their daughters from a house where such irregularities are going on. Much as you seem to dislike poor Miss Crittenden, you would hardly wish to be the cause of her losing the half, perhaps two-thirds, of her pupils. You are surely not reckless enough for that?'

The case had never occurred to me in that light. I was a little staggered at the possible results of a thoughtless action, and was about to extenuate the fault by stating,

truly, that I had never written but that one letter to any of the girls; that Emma Hugginson had written to me first, several times; that I could not help returning an answer; that her looks, I thought, told me how fond she was of me; that only last Sunday, on going out of church, as I passed Miss Crittenden's girls in the crowd in the porch, Emma Hugginson had squeezed my hand—with one or two other like confidences. Something, however, closed my mouth. I said nothing.

'But that is not all,' continued my mother, perhaps a little pitying my confusion, and speaking in a more confidential and equal tone than she had ever done before. 'How, Donald, could you ever think of such a vulgar creature as that Emma Hugginson? Her red cheeks are the cheeks of a penny doll. Her manners are common, in spite of her intercourse with well-bred schoolfellows; her carriage is bad, in spite of calisthenics and the drilling-master. Her fixed stare and her set simper are marks, if I am not mistaken, of cunning rather than of innocent simplicity. I have often wondered, too, that, in a select school like hers, Miss Crittenden should have taken the daughter of a tradesman, of a shopkeeper, in the town.'

'Her father's money is as good as other people's; and her father's waiting behind the counter is no sin.'

'You talk like a silly schoolboy. I know that it is no sin; but it is a circumstance incompatible with *our* position in life. Supposing you were old enough to mean anything serious with Emma Hugginson, *we* should not like to see you standing behind the counter with an apron on, helping your father-in-law. In my family, the rule of matrimonial connection, in cases where fortune on both sides was scanty, has always been that the lady should have good connections and the young man education and ability. Pretty connections, the Hugginsons! If they kept a shop a hundred miles away, the nuisance might be bearable; but here, in the same town, under our very noses, intolerable! Do

you forget that the Earl of Cairn Goram is my second cousin, and that, in default of heirs male, his peerage is hereditary in the female line? If exactly seventeen persons now living were dead, dying without issue, *you* would be the Earl of Cairn Goram. Think of that, Donald; and then think of the Hugginson's!

I had not before heard that the title was so transmissible. I did think of the Hugginsons; and determined to make flirtation capital out of Emma's chance of becoming Countess of Cairn Goram.

'If,' said my mother, more and more confidentially, 'if, instead of that Hugginson girl, it had been Miss Niedermeyer, the case would have been different. Adelaide Niedermeyer is a lady; her father, Sir George, is British Minister at Modena, with every prospect of rising in the service. Our family have always regarded diplomacy and diplomatists with a kindly feeling. Miss Niedermeyer is unpretending, and yet firm and intelligent. The early loss of her mother has taught her to think for herself at an age when other girls are children. She is not what sixth-form boys call pretty, but she will make a very handsome and distinguished woman. With Adelaide Niedermeyer it would have been quite a different affair.'

'Miss Niedermeyer never gave me the least encouragement. I doubt whether she even knows me by sight.'

'Of course. She is correct in her behaviour, which is more than can be said of your crimson-faced favourite. I am sure you see your folly, Donald. You must promise me never to write to that girl again. You are now aware of the serious injury which you might inflict on Miss Crittenden; and, as to Emma Hugginson, banish her from your thoughts at once. The idea is too absurd to be talked of seriously. Have I your promise? or must I consult your father what is to be done?'

'Certainly, mother,' I replied; 'I am far from wishing to hurt Miss Crittenden. I will try to avoid doing so; I will promise you that. But as to anything further, our

thoughts are not always under our own control, and I do not feel sure that I should be able to keep the promise, if made.'

'We shall see, sir, how you go on. I wonder what Dr. Thornley would say, if he knew that one reason of your sorry figure in class was a flirtation with a pupil in a Ladies' School!'

CHAPTER II.

Now this same Dr. Thornley was the prime mover in scrape the second—that is to say, if it was not myself.

In 18— (the exact date is of no importance: these events happened less than a century ago), the mode of enforcing discipline in Grammar Schools was severer and more frequently exercised than I have lived to see it in 1863. Dr. Thornley was a good scholar and a kindly man upon the whole; but he was a potentate who held fast to his prerogative, and who would never utterly abdicate his birchen sceptre. He would use his privilege sparingly, with forbearance; but he would not yield his right to exercise it. A case where circumstances might seem to render the putting it in force inexpedient, was the very case to rouse his magistral blood and make him apply the rod, happen what might, both as a warning to offenders and a legal assertion of his power. No boy in the Z—— Grammar School, no boy's parents, should ever boast that, between the bare skin of any culprit and the bundle of avenging twigs contact was impossible, if circumstances pointed in that direction. It is only just to say that those provocative circumstances were neither frequent nor frivolous; but they might happen to any boy on any day, from the smallest to the tallest—from the free boy on the foundation to the heir of an alderman or the son of a squire. Rhadamanthus was less inexorable.

Neither did Dr. Thornley approve of his boys meddling with aught save Latin and Greek, so long as they were under his tuition. When they left him they might follow their own devices. But for Latin and

Greek, King Edward had founded the school, and good Grecians and Latinists he was determined to produce. The classical success of his pupils at either University was incense to his nostrils and music to his ears. He attributed it, mentally, to the all-pervading influence of birch. He was obliged to tolerate, at short stated intervals, a mathematical and a writing master within his walls; but music, drawing, physics, modern languages, natural history (then struggling against the charge of heresy)—in short, all modern sciences, were tabooed, contraband, to be studied in secret, as though the students thereof were guilty of black arts and sorcery.

I was a day-boy at the Z—— Grammar School. My parents' residence in the town dispensed with my becoming a boarder. I was in the sixth form, and might have been at the top of it, but was considerably nearer to the bottom. I must confess that, at that time, I was the idlest and most disorderly of boys—that is, I did not confine myself to Latin and Greek; and when I did work at them, it was not regularly, but by fits and starts. I was fond of studies and pursuits which were foreign to the regular course of the school. I neglected Greek play for modern drama; preferred Byron, then living, to dead Persius and Juvenal; read voyages and travels, instead of making iambics; and stuffed the birds of the neighbourhood when I should have been cramming the Birds of Aristophanes.

My mother gave me frequent lectures respecting this waste of valuable time. I was sent to the Grammar School, she said, to learn what was taught at the school, and not to fritter away quarter after quarter in making toys and reading books which had no reference to my education. She heard of Dr. Thornley's increasing dissatisfaction with sorrow, but without surprise. Nor did I mend. Themes and exercises were hurried over more and more carelessly; and several repeated half-days' absences (connected with Scrape the Third) without my parents' written leave—in plain school-boy English, truanting—filled the

cup to overflowing. The Doctor said no boy should defy him; he had warned me often enough; he had inflicted minor impositions: he now imposed three hundred lines of the *Æneid* to be committed to memory by a certain and not very distant day. If I failed to say them by heart, I must make up my mind to submit to punishment; and punishment, at Z—— Grammar School, meant the rod with all its attendant circumstances. If I refused to submit to the rod, the Doctor's only alternative, he said, was to expel me.

Expulsion from any public or grammar school is a serious impediment to a boy's future career. It excludes him from almost every honourable professional opening. As to giving up myself meekly to be flogged, with more than a hound's disgrace, it was impossible. I was no longer a boy, but a young man, and to that shameful exposure I had resolved not to yield, even if I were driven to knock Dr. Thornley down before his assembled boys and ushers. I felt certain that the imposed three hundred lines of Virgil would not, and in my present state of mind could not, be learned by the appointed date. How to get out of the dilemma I knew not. I thought of escaping in some direction, still unknown; of running away, or going to sea. But how? whither? The next month's future lay before me enveloped in the thickest obscurity.

CHAPTER III.

My native place, Z——, I ought to tell you, is a cathedral town, with not much to enliven it. We had several sets and circles of society, each of which kept very much to itself—that is, there was no getting out of one set into another, upwards. There you were, fixed for life, regarding the circle or circles above you as elderly gentlemen regard the glaciers that surround the summit of the Jungfrau—very pretty to look at, but unapproachable.

The great world thus elevated for the admiration of the little world of Z—— comprised within its sphere

two quite distinct sets of people—the permanent, staid inhabitants of the Cathedral Close, with their shovel-hats, fine old port, and kindly intercourse with those within their pale, and the dashing cavalry officers who dwelt for a twelvemonth (to be succeeded by other dashers) in the vast caravanserai on the outskirts of the town known as ‘The Horse Barracks.’ These two branches of good society met on polite but not very intimate terms. They visited; for the Dean was a general’s son, and the Bishop had a nephew in the army. The ladies also were nearly equally well born and equally well bred in one set as in the other; but when once the first calls were paid and returned, and the dinners of welcome given to new arrivals, they saw not very much of each other, except on public occasions, such as balls and meetings. After the first two or three months, the officers were apt to find their residence dull; to obviate which they initiated sundry amusements from time to time—a cricket-match, a steeple-chase, or, to the general delight, an open-air ball, concluding with fireworks.

In 18—, my father was Mayor of Z—, which circumstance compelled us to enter the charmed circle of which we before merely touched the circumference; for he was neither clerical, professional, nor military. He was a large wholesale merchant, sufficiently well educated to converse with people of leisure, but too much occupied with warehouse and ledger to devote much of his time to their company. My mother was perfectly capable of receiving ladies and gentlemen who were invited by the mayor, her husband; and so, although I can hardly tell how, I got to know the officers. I was especially patronized by one in particular—a Captain Fitzjames, a spirited young fellow, who used to bring me back rare birds to stuff when he went out shooting, drove me occasionally in his dog-cart, and got me admitted to all the fêtes which his colleagues set on foot.

One evening, at mess, the bright idea was started to treat the town of Z—to a balloon ascent. The

majority of the inhabitants had never seen such a thing; and it is one of the few sights of which those who have already seen it never tire or can behold without interest. Mr. Griffiths, the leading aéronaut of the day, was written to, to state on what terms he would come to Z— forthwith, bringing his aérostatic apparatus with him.

Mr. Griffiths duly replied that his own balloon was under repair, and unavailable for the present; but that an admirable balloon, not his own, in which he had already made several ascents with a lady for his companion, could be had for the proposed occasion, provided the officers would guarantee to make good any accident or damage that might occur to it while in their service. That his terms for the ascent were so much, but that he would be content with a smaller sum, provided he were allowed, previous to the actual ascent, to let people mount for a money payment to a certain height in the captive balloon by means of a rope fastened to the car, allowing it to rise and descend at will.

The proposal, to which there seemed no objection, was agreed to. Groups of people, in different parts of the town, collected to peruse a colossal poster announcing that, by permission of the Right Worshipful the Mayor, on the afternoon of a certain day, Mr. Griffiths, the celebrated aéronaut, would make an ascent from the Vauxhall Gardens in that magnificent balloon, the ‘High-flyer,’ accompanied by a lady amateur. Cards of invitation to the inner circle obtainable only of the officers of the —th Dragoons. Tickets to the outer circle, 2s. 6d., to be had of Mr. Griffiths, at the Gardens. The Band of the Regiment to be in attendance. Ascents in the captive balloon during the three previous days, 10s. 6d. each person.

It was publicly rumoured that, besides the aéronaut and the unknown lady, one of the officers would join in the ‘Highflyer’s’ final ascent; while everybody in the fashionable world of Z— knew that my friend, Captain Fitzjames, was the officer in question.

Now, amongst my numerous naughtinesses was a curiosity to know all about ballooning. I had studied the biographies of aëronauts, from the Montgolfiers down to Blanchard and Sadler. Ballooning, with its wondrous facts and mysterious possibilities, had taken strong hold of my imagination. Dr. Thornley had set us a copy of Latin hexameters on the flight of Icarus. I wrote the verses and got praised for once. But Icarus, for me, was an unreal, visionary myth; it was the fate of Pilatre de Rosier which inspired me. I had never seen a balloon, still less a balloon ascent; yet I had got the mode of inflation by heart. The construction of a fire-balloon had been suddenly cut short by my mother, who feared I should set the ancient city of Z—— on fire. I naturally, therefore, applied to my military protector for an introduction to the aëronaut strangers as soon after their arrival as possible.

To the Vauxhall Gardens at Z—— was attached a Vauxhall Hotel, where the visitors stayed. The lady had engaged for her own use a suite of rooms in the quietest part of the house. We called. The captain asked for a private room, and sent in his card to Mr. Griffiths. In two minutes he appeared, followed by the lady.

She was a young woman of two or three and twenty, and I thought her the most graceful and pleasing creature I had ever beheld. She was a trifle above the middle height, with harmonious features, expressive gray eyes, well-arched eyebrows, a pale but clear complexion, pearly teeth, and a winning smile. Before Griffiths had time to present her she offered her hand to Captain Fitzjames with the frankness of an old acquaintance.

‘You! Isabella Lestroppe! Are you the lady amateur whom Griffiths has announced to us?’

‘Certainly. You know me well enough not to be surprised at finding me here. I have long been aware of your inclination for ballooning, and that it would come to an ascent one of these days; so I determined, under my friend Griffith’s tuition, to qualify myself to

accompany you, and perhaps take care of you.’

Mr. Griffiths looked more astonished than pleased at this recognition and explanation; nevertheless he ventured no remark. His age, then, might be thirty, though he looked older in the face. In form he was a model, not tall, but well-knit, supple, and with every muscle developed. His countenance was intelligent and not devoid of manly grace; but it was indelibly marked with the aëronaut’s lines, imprinted by the habitual imminence of sudden death. As warm in heart as cool in difficulties, he had speedily fallen in love with his pupil. His proposal that she should share his fortunes for better for worse had been firmly declined, with no other explanation than that its acceptance was impossible. Griffiths now at once understood that he saw before him the real impediment to his happiness. Poor man! It was a hard blow to him, but was not the first disappointment in life he had suffered.

From that visit until the definite ascent of the balloon I saw a good deal of the adventurous damsel Miss Isabella Lestroppe. I was constantly backwards and forwards at the gardens; first, to witness the process of inflation, and afterwards the ascents in the captive balloon, which had a prodigious success. On those occasions Griffiths frequently accompanied his customers during their brief trip into the upper regions, but in the majority of cases not; for every time he did so he sacrificed half a guinea, by occupying the place of a paying person. When he thus sent up his cargoes of excitement-seekers I often asked myself, ‘What would be the feelings, and the fate, of such fool-hardy and inexperienced adventurers, were the rope, which drew them down to the ground again, to break suddenly and cast them adrift?’

The very awfulness of that idea only served to fascinate me the more. I longed to go up in the captive balloon; but my mother forbade it imperatively. The same of a free ascent; I ardently desired

to make one, and mentioned my wish to Captain Fitzjames. He acceded at once, remarking, that now they were in for it, they might have two or more ascents as easily as one. He called to ask my mother's permission. She flatly refused, appending to her refusal some disobliging allusions to Miss Lestroppe, which brought the colour to the captain's cheek.

Does the colonel's lady visit Miss Lestroppe?' she asked, sarcastically.

'She has not visited her yet, madam; but she will before long.'

'I am glad of it. She will then be fit society for my son.'

I did not wonder then, nor do I now, at the strong attachment which Griffiths felt for his pupil. To me she was a singularly attractive person. Her manners and conversation charmed me. She was simple and unaffected, extremely well informed, and she spoke of nothing with indifference. Whether for praise or blame, nothing to her was without its interest. Her intellect was clear, her will straightforward and decided. I never took the trouble to consider whether I regarded her as an elder sister or a friend; but this I remember, that, in spite of the difference of our ages, Miss Hugginson's image was waning fast from my thoughts. School hours and school exercises were completely neglected. My mother heard of it, and of the cause, and expressed her displeasure accordingly.

On the evening previous to the day fixed for the ascent, somebody at the officers' mess suggested that it would come off with much greater *éclat* to Captain Fitzjames if performed by him and the lady alone, unassisted by the professional *aéronaut*; the feat would be all the more daring and romantic. Captain Fitzjames jumped at the idea. It was proposed at once to the lady and her colleague. The former hesitated at first, but finally consented to do it. The latter declined to accede to the proposition, on account, he said, of the risk thereby incurred; but in reality, it was thought, through a feeling of jea-

lousy, combined with wounded personal vanity.

Next morning the negotiations were renewed. I was present at the conference. With all that Miss Lestroppe could do to allay the rising storm, the captain and Griffiths got to high words. The former haughtily remarked that, as Griffiths had hired himself and his balloon to the mess, who were responsible for it, he was bound to obey their orders. The latter retorted, that he was a professional *aéronaut*, and no man's servant; that his engagement was to make a personal ascent with the balloon, and to take up any one whom the officers might name, but not to place the balloon at the disposal of any fool who was crazy enough to risk his neck. 'You will find, captain,' he added, 'that I stick to my bargain. You will either go up with me, or not at all.'

'Indeed!' replied the captain, disdainfully. 'We shall see about that;' and left the room.

Miss Lestroppe endeavoured to soften Griffiths, urging that she was perfectly competent to conduct the machine, and that his compliance would doubtless put additional cash in his pocket, besides ensuring future patronage. After some persuasion he appeared to yield, but would make no specific promise. Some sudden idea, some secret scheme seemed to be floating before his mind. We left him, to take a turn in the Gardens. There Miss Lestroppe spoke to me in confidence. She was aware of my desire to make an ascent, and gave me directions what to do that afternoon. As we parted, in came my mother and Miss Crittenden alone, admitted by special permission to observe the preliminaries of the great event.

She severely taxed me with impropriety. A lad of my age, she warmly insisted, ought not to frequent the society of a young woman occupying so equivocal a position—of a public performer, in fact, who was not noticed either by the ladies of the regiment or by any respectable family in the town; adding that, if I did not drop so doubtful an acquaintance at once, she would

speak to my father that very evening.

I replied, with wild, and, I fear, rude independence, that her prejudice against Miss Lestroppe was unkind and unfair; that she was a well-conducted as well as an accomplished young woman; and that, when evening came, I did not expect to hear any scolding on that or any other subject. My mother opened her eyes rather wide, but walked away quietly without reply, observing to Miss Crittenden that the balloon mania would soon be over, for the *aéronauts* would be going away to-morrow, and that I should then come to my senses again.

The eventful afternoon arrived. Inside, the gardens were quite full; outside, there were crowds of thousands and thousands, townspeople mingled with dusty throngs from the country. The inner circle, having the balloon in its centre, was occupied by the aristocracy of the town, the neighbouring squires and their families, and the officers' friends. There was a crush of well-dressed people. My father and mother were there. Miss Crittenden and her school were there, accommodated with a front seat, in consequence both of their short stature and their early arrival. Miss Lestroppe was there, also in front, as one of the actors in the scene, and seated next Miss Crittenden.

And I was there. My mother frowned as I took my place beside Miss Lestroppe. I retired. The more public, the more private. You can do things unnoticed in a crowd which you cannot do elsewhere. I profited by the opportunity.

The afternoon was neither stormy nor calm, but a little gusty. Although the clouds hung low they did not threaten rain at present. A relaxing warmth pervaded the air. In spite of the excitement of the moment, and the approaching realization of my wildest dreams, I felt heavily oppressed. But the regimental band played an inspiring march, scarcely overpowering the hum of conversation and curious inquiry which burst from the as-

sembled multitude. 'Which is the lady? Which is the captain? Which is the famous *aéronaut* who has made so many scores of ascents?'

But in the central group an intrigue was going on of which the outsiders had no suspicion. The question was, 'Is Mr. Griffiths, or is he not, to ascend in company with the adventurous couple? No agreement could be come to; Griffiths held out for his right to manage the balloon. The spectators began to be impatient to behold the final *denouement*.

'Is all ready, Griffiths?' the captain asked, with manifest irritation.

'All has been ready for some time, captain,' he replied, with a smile that was fuller of meaning than of satisfaction.

'Are you ready, Miss Lestroppe?'

'Perfectly.'

'Very well, then,' he said, taking the lady's hand, and advancing towards the car. 'Let us be off. And you, sir,' to Griffiths, remain where you are. Enter the car at your peril.'

'Very well, captain; be it so.'

At that instant, the balloon trembled, as if from a sudden tug; its globular mass heaved for a moment; and then, before the travellers could reach the car it rose from the ground, and soon was floating overhead. The captain looked the picture of dismay and disappointment. Miss Lestroppe stood rivetted to the spot like a statue. The occupants of the inner circle gazed at each other in astonishment. Every person inside the gardens was puzzled to behold the intended *aéronauts* left on *terra firma*. The outside multitude applauded loudly the magnificent upward course of the balloon. Not one in a thousand had observed that the car contained no visible occupant. Where was I at that exciting moment? From what retired and unobserved nook did I witness the launching of the *aërial ship*?

After the first surprise, whispers went round the inner circle, passing stealthily from lip to ear. My mother heard them, and nodded assent.

'It's a get-off,' they said. 'She's afraid, and he's afraid, too. Their pretended vexation is a piece of acting. They've bribed Mr. Griffiths to let the balloon slip away without them. They are safe enough now. They know they can't go up.'

The whispers, however, passed unheeded by the parties most interested in them, for, when the balloon was only some twenty feet from the ground, a slip of paper was blown from the car by a gust of the fitful breeze. As it fell, whirling in the air, Miss Crittenden caught it, glanced at it, whispered a word to Miss Lestroppe, and showed it to two of her pupils—Miss Hugginson and Miss Niedermeyer. Emma turned very red, but opposed a dogged silence to every question put to her; Adelaide, as soon as she saw it, looked up at the now far distant balloon, and fainted. Miss Lestroppe then stepped up to Mr. Griffiths, and uttered a few quick words in his ear.

'My God! my God!' he exclaimed distractedly, raising both his hands above his head. 'What have I done! What have I done!'

In half an hour the gardens were empty, and the multitude dispersed to their respective homes. In hers my mother felt angry at my absence. She believed me to be spending the evening in company with the *aéronauts* and their patron. After a sleepless night she began to be alarmed on learning that no news had been heard of me the following morning.

CHAPTER IV.

The second morning after the escape of the balloon, my mother was sitting alone in the breakfast-parlour, depressed and anxious at my continued absence. During the vigils of the night, she had determined to rescue me out of Miss Lestroppe's toils at the price of any concessions *to myself*. Miss Hugginson, in her eyes, was respectability itself compared with the bold adventuress. My father had gone to his counting-house, trying hard to

make believe that nothing had gone wrong in the family.

At the early hour of ten o'clock, the housemaid announced, with evident excitement, the visit of Miss Crittenden, accompanied by one of her pupils and 'a strange lady.'

'Show them into the drawing-room, Mary,' said my mother, impatiently, 'and say that I will be there directly. They are come to gratify their curiosity, perhaps,' she continued to herself, 'and want to know what has happened; or they may be intending to inflict upon me their condolence and their hopes for the best. But if Miss Hugginson's mother has dared to enter this house unasked, she will soon have a lesson to be more cautious.'

'Oh my!' said Mary to her fellow-servant, on returning to the kitchen; 'who would ever have thought that Miss Crittenden would ever consort with the like of that? Why, she come up the street side by side, quite familiar, along with the young woman who didn't go up in the balloon the day before yesterday. And she lets Miss Niedermeyer walk with her, too. I was watching them behind the drawing-room curtains ever so long before they knocked at the door.'

As soon as my mother entered the drawing-room, Miss Crittenden, offering her hand, said, 'Adelaide you know already; allow me to present Miss Lestroppe to you.'

'The would-be *aéronaut*?' inquired my mother, in a tone of displeasure and surprise. 'To what do I owe the honour of receiving so celebrated a person at my house?' she continued, with unconcealed contempt, and offering chairs to Miss Crittenden and her pupil, but omitting that politeness to Miss Lestroppe.

'Let us understand each other, Mrs. Cartwright,' said the latter, calmly. 'I am come here, if not to render a service, at least to express my regret for what has happened, to let you know the worst, and to help you to bear it as well as may be. I did not come to submit to insult, nor will I submit to it.'

There was something in Miss Crittenden's look and manner which

induced my mother to concede just a little. She offered a chair, resumed her seat, and motioned to her visitor to do the same.

'Unless you can treat me,' Miss Lestroppe continued, 'as one lady should treat another, I shall leave the house at once; which would be a pity. Miss Niedermeyer, who has some information to give, or rather to confirm, starts for Modena tomorrow, to join her father there. An opportunity has unexpectedly occurred of her performing the journey with a friend of mine and of her father's—a government messenger. I wish you well, madam: you may be proud of your pedigree, I am equally proud of mine. The lineal descendant of Irish kings will hardly humble herself to the cousin of a laird.'

'It is unfortunate, ma'am, that your princely blood should be overclouded by such evil reports. It is a strange position for a descendant of royalty to be talked of in connection with a vagabond *aéronaut*.'

'Speak less disrespectfully of Mr. Griffiths, if you please, Mrs. Cartwright,' rejoined Miss Lestroppe, without losing temper. 'He is an *aéronaut*, certainly, and an able one, but no vagabond further than the act of frequent travelling implies. The vulgar calumny to which you allude, shows that you must listen to scandal from very low quarters indeed. You will allow me to inform you that I am as well conducted a woman as yourself.'

'Then why are you here, travelling with Griffiths, the *aéronaut*, under such questionable circumstances?'

'Because it has suited my plans and my tastes. Listen to me, madam, for one moment, and suppress your prejudices, if you can. All women are not like you, cautious, hesitating, undecided, afraid of the world's first-expressed opinion. At last I have attained success, and the world's opinion will be on my side. I am shortly to become the captain's wife.'

'That is, we have your word for it.'

'All women are not liars, madam. You know, at least, that there is

nothing between Captain Fitzjames and an Irish earldom with an English barony attached. I always intended to be his wife. I have long seen that that conclusion was inevitable. It was his destiny, and mine: he loves me passionately, and I do not shrink from saying that I love him very dearly.'

'From your own statement, then, it appears that you have clearly been running after him here.'

'There was no fear of his forgetting me. The shaft had struck too deep for that; I surprise and charm him, too. I am no sickly girl who cannot live out of a hot-house. On a good hunter I can follow the pack with the best rider that ever wore scarlet coat. Look at my arm; it is smooth and rounded, but as hard as marble. My fingers are white, but they are clasps of steel. With the small sword there is not an officer in the regiment who can touch me.'

'And to acquire that skill,' interrupted my mother, with a sneer, 'you took instructions from a succession of military fencing-masters, and gained their confidence during private lessons.'

'You obstinately will continue to put the worst construction on everything. No, madam; I learnt the use of the sword from a spirited French fencing-mistress, who, were you to address to her the same insinuation as you have to me, would, if you refused to apologize, instantly give you a box on both ears. I refrain, informing you that I am not a bad shot either with the rifle or the revolver, as I would willingly show you were you inclined to see, and were our time not otherwise occupied.'

'Very feminine accomplishments to boast of,' said my mother, in the tone people use when they wish to disparage an acquaintance.

'Feminine! What do you mean by feminine? I can cook, if needs be. I can net, I can knit, I can sew; I made this mantle with my own hands: I can speak and write French and Italian. Certainly, I never wasted my time on practising music; my husband will not be tormented with everlasting ballads and wearisome fantasias. When-

ever we want a little music, we shall have the means of going to concerts and operas. But remember, Mrs. Cartwright, if you please, that my future husband is a soldier. We shall certainly not leave the regiment before he succeeds to the title, if then. At any time we may be ordered out to India or the Cape, and have to struggle hand to hand for mastery with treacherous Hindoos or savage Caffres. Should a great European war break out, as some suppose possible, I shall not let my husband go alone. Which do you call the most feminine—a woman whom her husband drags along with him as a helpless burden, or one who can keep up with him in pursuit or flight, and can defend his life and her own in extremity? It was to surprise Captain Fitzjames with a new accomplishment, that I took instructions of Mr. Griffiths, and have acquired the art of managing a balloon at its ascent and descent, and while in the air. Griffiths allows that I am now as competent as himself, and that any one may safely trust themselves to my guidance.'

'In short, ma'am, by your own showing, you are one of those dare-devil women whom society tries to keep at a distance, as it does every other startling social phenomenon.'

'As if courage were a crime and cowardice a virtue in women, although they are the reverse in men. For myself, I own that I know not fear. Danger is only a delightful excitement, which instantly summons my presence of mind, and heightens all my faculties. In a storm at sea, threatened with shipwreck, I have watched every manœuvre and every chance, and enjoyed the sublimity of the scene. Boasting is a contemptible weakness, but I do not boast when I state that on a field of battle I believe I should remain as cool and collected, as completely mistress of myself, as I am here, in this drawing-room. Danger is an elixir which only invigorates firm minds, and tones them to their highest pitch of strength. How glorious, for instance, is a balloon ascent! • And the higher I have been, the more glorious it was. To

feel oneself suspended, in open space, by a few slender threads! To be borne by a vessel whose action depends on the equilibrium of elastic and inflammable gases! To look at our globe, wrapped in its cloudy mantle, with an approach to the way in which it is beheld by the dwellers on the moon! To gain such views of earth as we fancy, in our dreams, are the privilege of angels and spiritual beings! And on mounting higher, and gasping for breath in the thin air, to be reminded of our own gross material nature, and that, corporeally, we are scarcely better than fish living in an aërial sea (the atmosphere) with a very limited power of swimming in it, and that only by artificial means. I know that sudden death is possible, but I look it firmly in the face. The thought makes my pulse beat more strongly, but not more quickly by the tenth of a second. Do you think that while I am gazing upon the clouds that roll beneath our car, or upon the earth spread out, like a bright-coloured map, or upon the distant sea, over which a sudden change of wind may drive me—do you think I trouble myself much, then, about what such people as the Mayoress of Z—— and her coterie will say of my doings? No, Mrs. Cartwright, I fear nothing; I care not for evil tongues; I fear nothing in this world.'

'And, perhaps, nothing in the next? Were you not so young, I should not be surprised that a person so free in conduct as you are should be an avowed freethinker?'

'Again, madam, your judgment is harsh, unjust, and untrue. I am a Catholic, and a better Christian, perhaps, than yourself; for I have more charity and more faith. I do not dally with dangerous books—with your sophist Humes or your renegade Gibbons; I push them aside or cast them out. I obey the church in which I believe: I observe her fasts rigidly, and appreciate the wisdom which imposes them; I strictly fulfil my religious duties, including that of confession; I confer with my spiritual director immediately before undertaking any

hazardous enterprise; I commit no sin; I obtain absolution for accidental and unintentional errors. What have I to fear in a future world?

'No sin! Is not your pride, your ambition, your desperate seeking after wordly advancement, a sin?'

'In my case, Holy Church says not. My object is not purely selfish. Marriage with me will save Captain Fitzjames from many faults, perhaps even from falling into heresy. He is but a lukewarm Catholic at best, and in a moment of weakness might fall away from the ancient faith. The church greatly prefers that I should become countess of E——, than that a Protestant woman should present heirs to the earldom. Conditional on that event, I had already made two vows to the Holy Virgin.'

'Superstition combined with impudent intrigue!' my mother muttered between her teeth.

'Yesterday, I made a third vow, imploring her aid with regard to your son, although he is not one of Her worshippers.'

'Your own affairs ought to be enough to occupy you, without troubling yourself with mine. What of my son? I don't know how far he has been admitted to your intimacy; but if you had given him bad advice and had led him astray, I should not be much surprised.'

Without noticing the attack, Miss Lestroppe continued, 'The only object of my visit is to inform you what I fear has become of your son. I am very, very sorry indeed for it. I would give a hundred pounds to be with him at this moment. Although they can do no harm, you will scarcely succeed in recovering him by such means as these. This morning's 'Times' contains an advertisement, which I presume to be addressed to him:

'To D. C.—Come home at once: your immediate presence here will be the best way to stop unpleasant rumours. Dr. T. consents that the lines may be written. Emma's father shall be spoken to. You may take your up-journey with Mr. G., only come home. Your anxious mother.'

'I fear he is far out of the reach of any appeal of the kind.'

'You know where he is then?'

'I only guess approximately.'

'You guess! you are cautious, madam; you are cunning. You may be attractive and artful enough to mislead a boy; your pretended engagement to Captain Fitzjames may be only a blind to screen your schemes on my son. You may be a clever adventuress; but the law will thwart you. Donald is a minor, and still subject to his parents' authority. Bring him back to us without an hour's delay; and,—and,—we will promise to refrain from punishing or exposing your conduct.'

'Uncharitable woman!' said Miss Lestroppe, gravely, but still without anger. 'It is you who merit punishment. You will not allow me to soften the blow which I find myself at last compelled to inflict. Harsh woman! Your son, at this moment, is either up in the clouds with my balloon, or has fallen with it; whether on the earth or in the sea no mortal here can tell. Wherever he may be, I repeat, I would give a hundred pounds, I would give any sum, to be by his side.'

CHAPTER V.

At this stunning announcement of my whereabouts, my mother neither screamed, nor lamented aloud, nor wrung her hands in despair, nor fainted. She turned deadly pale, and fell back gradually in her chair with her arms drooping loosely on either side, like a strong man sinking in spite of his utmost effort, under a burden too heavy for his strength. A cold perspiration overspread her frame. The three ladies looked on with silent sympathy. After a long and painful pause, wiping her brow with her clammy palm, 'Give me air!' she said. 'Open the window!'

The brisk morning breeze, streaming in, played around her pallid temples, and little by little refreshed her languor and restored her self-command. But the expression of her countenance had changed completely; it implied an appeal for help, a claim for pity. Gazing steadfastly and yet not unkindly at Miss Lestroppe, herself deeply agitated,

she stretched out her arms, and breathed rather than spoke; the words, 'Forgive me!'

Miss Lestroppe, on her knees before my mother's chair, threw her arms round her neck. My mother burst into uncontrollable tears and hid her face in her new friend's bosom, who gently whispered, 'Forgive me, dear madam! the fault may be, in great measure, mine.'

After the relief thus afforded to her overwrought feelings, my mother seated Miss Lestroppe beside her, still retaining her hand in hers. 'And now, what is to be done?' she asked.

'Nothing can be done at present. The first thing is to know what is required to be done—in which direction it is of any use making any attempt to afford assistance. Ever since that sad afternoon, Griffiths and myself have been sending up pilot balloons, to ascertain what currents are prevalent in the atmosphere. All yesterday, they were cross and contradictory; and,' she added, looking up anxiously at the clouds, 'there appears to be no change to-day. It is quite a matter of chance—that is, it is beyond our ken, which way the balloon drifted—which current carried it off, after it disappeared from view. Still, the majority of the chances appear to be in Donald's favour.'

'What do you mean by, in his favour?'

'The two great dangers which we fear are, first, that as he does not know how to effect a descent, and had no anchor or grappling-iron to effect it with, the balloon should be carried out either to the Atlantic Ocean on one hand or to the North Sea on the other. The middle currents of the air sweep, luckily, from the north to the south; if the balloon floats in them, it will be carried over to the continent of Europe, and that great danger will be avoided. The second is, that the balloon should have darted upwards to an enormous height and have continued to soar in a highly rarified atmosphere, rendering breathing difficult; or worse, that from the expansion of the gas under diminished pressure, the balloon should have burst

and have fallen to the ground. I do not believe that catastrophe has happened. It would have occurred soon after the ascent, and we should have heard of the fallen balloon by this time. Nor do I believe that it has risen to any great or inconvenient altitude. To ensure a gentle and majestic ascent, I had it laden as heavily as possible, calculating on just sufficient ascensional power to carry us up and away from the town. The barometer too was then, and, as you may see, still remains very low. For several days past, the air has not been in a buoyant state. Let us put our trust, say in Providence, leaving my own peculiar faith out of the question. It would be a great comfort to me to know that Donald was still with the balloon, suspended between heaven and earth; and a secret something tells me that such is yet the case. Oh, that I were but with him!'

'Would to God you were! But he will be starved to death.'

'No. Not knowing where we might alight, and what fare we might meet with, I had the car supplied with the materials for a hearty dinner for three, taking so much ballast the less. This, economized, will suffice to support one person for three or four days, at the very least.'

'He will die of thirst.'

'No, again. There are two bottles of wine; and, better still, instead of using sacks of sand to regulate the buoyant force, I tried, as an experiment, bladders filled with water, which are less heavy than sand and yet quite heavy enough to serve as ballast. He cannot fail to discover their contents. The cold, if he is not carried into very elevated regions, may be sharp, but not unbearably severe. His great loss of heat will be by radiation into open space, to prevent which there is a thick railway wrap and two sheets of impermeable mackintosh. Please God, all may yet be well. May the Holy Virgin watch over him!'

'Amen!' sighed my mother devoutly, forgetful of her Protestant principles. 'But, after all,' she added, 'how are you so sure that Donald was in the car when the balloon escaped? May he not have

merely run away from home, as he almost intimated that he would?

'It was to give you proof of that fact, that Miss Crittenden and Miss Niedermeyer accompanied me hither. The probable absence at which he hinted, was to be occasioned not by flight, from which I dissuaded him, but by his accompanying Captain Fitzjames and myself in our ascent. You know how anxious he was to mount in the captive balloon: you can guess how earnestly he entreated me to make room for him. I did not want Griffiths to be of the party; I did not wish to afford scandal-mongers the opportunity of evil-speaking, by being left alone, even in an aerial solitude, with Captain Fitzjames. I therefore indicated to Donald the means of concealing himself unobserved in the car. It was agreed that, as soon as we were fairly launched, he should rise from beneath his covering and show you where he was, and the public that we were *three* to make the voyage. He *was* so concealed; but, if any doubt could remain, it is dissipated by the scrap of paper which fell from the car, and which produced such an effect on Miss Niedermeyer, and, when I explained the case, on Mr. Griffiths.'

'I understand it now.'

'That scrap was another of Miss Hugginson's epistles to your son. Miss Niedermeyer, affecting to see nothing, had seen her slip it into his hand only half an hour before, exactly as she saw her give him a netted silk purse a few days ago. At first, Miss Hugginson denied the fact; selfishly suppressing her knowledge that Donald must be in the car, to screen herself from punishment. The note was artfully without signature; instead of a name was the imitation of a forget-me-not blossom cut out in blue adhesive paper. But Miss Niedermeyer had seen her apply others of the same kind to her notes; there was the handwriting also to convict her; and when hard pressed, she finally admitted that the paper which fell from the car was the same which she had just passed over to Donald.'

'I see,' said my mother, sighing deeply, 'that it would be blind-

ness any longer to entertain delusive hopes.'

'Entertain hopes, my dear madam, by all means, although you can no longer suppose that he has *not* been carried away. The Holy Virgin is powerful, and the church's arm is long. My confessor has written to his general at Rome. If Donald touches ground wherever there is a member of the Order, his wants will be provided for.'

'That is but a poor chance and a feeble consolation. Why cannot you and Mr. Griffiths, assisted by the officers of the regiment, direct a search at once and take part in it yourselves?'

'The absence of all trace or indication precludes it. The balloon has disappeared, leaving no clue or track. On every account, I should be glad to discover to which point of the compass our attention should be turned. For, (why should I conceal it from you?) apart from any natural feelings of humanity, I have a personal interest in the discovery. It is agreed between Fitzjames and myself that we are to be married immediately that your son is restored to you; and that, in any case, we will wait until there is some certain news. Should evil happen, which I pray God to avert, we shall bitterly deplore his loss; because I at least shall have to reproach myself with having been in part the involuntary cause of it.'

My mother shuddered, as if with a sudden chill, but held her peace.

'For another reason,' Miss Lestroppe continued, 'we must remain here for a few days longer. The report that the escape of the balloon was only a trick to get rid of it, suggested by the fears of Fitzjames, of myself, or of both, can be met in one way only. Griffiths's own balloon is repaired at last, and is posting hither as fast as horses can drag it. As soon as it arrives, whatever the weather, we shall both make an ascent together with Griffiths, to show the world we are no cowards. After that, we shall have only one thought—the restoration of your son safe and sound.'

My mother was evidently worn out by the strain upon her mind and

her feelings during this interview. Her visitors took an affectionate leave, which was all the more touching on the part of Miss Niedermeyer that she was at the same time bidding farewell to an acquaintance

whom she might never behold again. As soon as they were out of the house, Miss Crittenden called on our family physician, communicated the circumstances, and advised his seeing my mother immediately.

MY QUEEN.

I.

WHEN and how shall I earliest meet her?
 What are the words she first will say?
 By what name shall I learn to greet her?
 I know not now; it will come some day!
 With the self-same sunlight shining upon her,
 Shining down on her ringlets sheen,
 She is standing somewhere, she I shall honour,
 She that I wait for, my queen, my queen!

II.

Whether her hair be golden or raven,
 Whether her eyes be hazel or blue,
 I know not now, but 'twill be engraven
 Some day hence as my loveliest hue.
 Many a girl I have loved for a minute,
 Worshipped many a face I have seen,
 Ever and ay there was something in it,
 Something that could not be hers, my queen!

III.

I will not dream of her tall and stately,
 She that I love may be fairy light;
 I will not say she must move sedately,
 Whatever she does it will then be right.
 She may be humble or proud, my lady,
 Or that sweet calm which is just between;
 And whenever she comes she will find me ready
 To do her homage, my queen, my queen!

IV.

But she must be courteous, she must be holy,
 Pure in her spirit, this maiden I love;
 Whether her birth be noble or lowly
 I care no more than the spirits above.
 But I'll give my heart to my lady's keeping,
 And ever her strength on mine shall lean;
 And the stars may fall and the saints be weeping
 Ere I cease to love her, my queen, my queen!



THE POOL UNDER THE BEECHES.

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

CHAPTER I.

WHO did it? What was it?

Nothing but a splash in the deep pool, which was black with overhanging trees and shadows; and a pale moon peering down amongst them saw what was done, and who did it.

But we must go back one turn of the hour-glass—back to the large house in the park, whose chimneys in the daytime were within sight of the pool, and before whose windows a solitary figure stood looking at them with the uncertain air of a man who has a purpose, but who scarcely knows how to accomplish it.

And he, the figure, went up into the glare of the largest window as it fell far out on the gravel. Rain had been falling, but it was over; and the light clouds drifting away from the moon left her to shine out in pallid contrast to the warmer glare in which the solitary man stood.

A haggard man he was, with that light upon him; with bright, restless eyes and sallow cheeks; and he crept forward and put his face to the window. He saw within the faces of many whom he had known, but out of whose books of remembrance he, whose life had been but a reckless one, was probably blotted. He did not care for that. His gaze rested upon one amongst the guests, who bore a shadowy resemblance to himself, without his haggardness, without the marks of a wild life which lay undefinably upon his own features, yet like him.

But the shutters flew up into their places, and he turned away. In that room there was no one, after all, whom he cared to see.

A light breath of autumn air shook the drops from the trees, and reached him, laden with the freshness that follows rain, but it failed to refresh him. And suddenly a light flashed upon a window to the left, a shadow passed before it, and then the sash was raised, and a face leaned out in the still beautiful

night. This was what he wanted to see; for once fate had favoured him, and he sprang forward out of the shade with a cry, in which rang out the pent-up passion of sorrow, and longing, and disappointment,—

‘Isabel!’

The figure in the window started, and turned aside, so that the light might fall full upon him.

‘George—you here?’

‘Yes, I am here. Here, where there is no place and no welcome for me,’ said the wanderer; ‘where nobody wants me.’

‘You wrong us. There is a welcome for you. Come in.’

‘Do I wrong you? Do I? It is with you I must speak, Isabel; I have nothing to do with the Squire of Beechwood or his guests; they don’t want a skeleton at the feast; neither would I have any communication with that double of myself whose smooth life flings my own back at me as a taunt. Let me speak to you.’

The Squire’s daughter drew back a little from the window. This wandering spirit, whom she had known from boyhood, should have divined that she was not likely to hold converse with him in so seemingly clandestine a fashion.

‘Come into the house, George Redfern, if you have anything to say.’

‘To tell you my secret before your father and his guests! Is there no mercy in you? If I do come in, will you listen to me in this room, alone, for five minutes?’

Isabel hesitated, but not for long. He was no burglar, that she should refuse him entrance. Moreover, there was that in his tone, as well as in her own consciousness of what she had to say to him, which touched her with pity. She crossed the hall, and let him in.

‘You do yourself and us injustice, George,’ said Isabel. ‘Why not come here as other people do—as your brother does?’

She stopped abruptly. An ex-

pression of ferocity, which had struggled to be appealing, had come over George Redfern's face at the last word.

'My stepbrother, you mean; I have no brother. Well, since you will speak of him, be it so. I owe him nothing. What is the accident of birth, that it should elbow one man aside at every turn to give place to another? Do you remember the pool under the Beeches?'

'Out of which your brother dragged you, half drowned? Yes, I do.'

'Rather where he robbed me of my right when you were in danger. If we had been alone there would he have lifted a finger to save me?'

'For shame, George!'

'Yes, people were looking on; and it was a brave deed. Do you remember the coppice above the pool?'

'Where I saw you strike him, unprovoked? I remember that, too.'

A bright spot had come into Isabel's cheek, and she stood with one hand pressed upon the table, looking at the intruder, with a steady gleam of displeasure in her eye. But he could not see it.

'It was not unprovoked. He stood in my way then, as always. Was it my fault that I was a penniless younger son, that he should insult me with his advice and his offers of help? Before that day in the coppice I was an idler, and people have called me scamp; but since then, for the last two years, I have worked with a steady purpose. Isabel, what am I?'

A hard answer rose to Isabel's lips, but below all anger and impatience against the headstrong younger brother lay still a substratum of pity for him.

'A foolish fellow, George Redfern, who distrusts his friends and nurses an absurd antagonism against those who are anxious only for his welfare.'

George Redfern leaned forward a little with his two hands clasped before her, and the gloom of his face changed and softened into an eager tenderness.

'What is the purpose for which

I have worked steadily these two long years? You know. There is but one thing that can save me. What I am now I have made myself; what I may yet be is in your hands. Such as I am, I love you, Isabel.'

Having said this, it did not seem as if he had power to break the silence which succeeded, or the spell of that questioning eagerness with which he watched the colour rise up slowly to her face, until, by an impulsive movement of the hand pressing upon the table, he saw suddenly the bright flash of a diamond.

With a rapid spring to the conclusion which perhaps she had meant him to draw from her movement, he started forward; all the tenderness gone from his face in its quick lighting up with stormy passion.

'Tell me, is it—is it——?'

'George, I shall care for you—do care for you—as a sister would for her brother. Try to believe me when I say that we both care for you.'

A cry of uncontrollable passion broke from George.

'Godfrey, again; my blight, my evil genius!'

That gentleness which is due in all cases from a woman to the man whom she rejects struggled with Isabel's indignation against this denouncer of his brother, and she was silent.

'Thrust aside once more for him,' cried George. 'This time shall be the last. Isabel, good-bye.'

And before a word or gesture of hers could reach him the light was flickering in a gust from the wide open window, and he was gone.

CHAPTER II.

'Isabel, we want you.'

A chorus of voices greeted her as she re-entered the drawing-room, with the burden of that interview and its strange ending upon her. Was it possible that not half an hour had passed since she quitted this same room? Its aspect was unchanged; knots of talkers were congregated here and there; the

Squire was still a victim to that long, lean Colonel Cardan, who took so profound an interest in Italy, past and present; and the young cornet with coal-black moustaches was yet talking bagatelles with the group of young ladies who had called to her as she opened the door.

Before her was the party of guests to whom as hostess she owed her attention, and behind her the moonlight, a wide open window, and a dark figure hurrying away across the park; who knew whither?

Dully she listened to the buzz of conversation around her with some faint effort to separate the topics of the different speakers, yet hearing them all in a confused maze which refused to clear itself; for to add to her preoccupation, one single guest of all those whom she had left there was absent—Godfrey Redfern. Where could he be? And how could she ask of these chattering girls a question which would surely turn upon herself the whole battery of their fun?

Chorus. 'Isabel shall settle it.'

Cornet. 'It being a question between the merits of a black retriever and a muddy Skye.'

Chorus. 'Not at all. What do you know about dogs? Isabel, do you know he took your Guinea fowls for jackdaws, and a cock pheasant for a pea-hen? A pretty sportsman! The question is this: Can croquet be called an unmanly pastime?'

Squire Bourne. 'Everybody knows that the poor Doge hadn't a leg to stand upon, and the secret Three managed the Lion's mouth as they pleased. Why, if ever the Doge was disposed to show mercy to a condemned man the Three contrived that the reprieve should be just a moment too late.'

Colonel Cardan. 'Ah! you got that from——'

Chorus. 'Don Quixote! What is the use of bringing him up? We were talking about croquet, not windmills. What has become of Mr. Redfern?'

Squire Bourne (escaping). 'A thousand pardons, colonel. Who wants Redfern? He is gone to look up

the keepers. Some one heard a shot, or fancied they did, in the direction of the Beeches, and Godfrey volunteered to spare my old legs. What are you ladies about there? Isabel, are we to have no music to-night?'

Isabel sat down to the piano, but other sounds were in her ears as she touched the keys, and other sights blurred her vision as she looked at the notes before her.

Then, when her mechanical performance was over, she got up and resigned her seat to some one else with the air of one who had accomplished a tiresome duty. And again snatches of the conversation between the Squire and his tormentor reached her, but this time the subject was not Italy. It drew her attention in spite of herself; it seemed to be endued with an importunate power of fascination for her, as it was for the Squire himself, who had started it upon the dissolving image of San Marco, and the state gondolas.

'Here, in happy England,' said the Squire; 'where justice is not administered by a secret Three; where a man is secure on his estate, his farm, or in his country-house——'

Colonel Cardan. 'For all that it is a fearful thing, that circumstantial evidence. It has hanged many a good man and true before now, and may put its intangible claws about the neck of many another.'

Squire Bourne (excitedly). 'I can't agree with you. Certainly I have read cases of the sort; but who will assure us that the written statements were not garbled? In fact I myself have been able to detect in such tales palpable discrepancies, which would at once invest them with suspicion, and therefore render them valueless as authorities. To tell me that an honest respectable English gentleman, in his own free country, amongst his own friends, can ever be in danger from any posterior evidence of a fact whose existence he denies. It is monstrous! Would not his word—my word for instance, or your own—be sufficient, backed as it would be with all the substantial surroundings of position, name, friends, and well-known honour?'

Colonel Cardan (calmly). 'We are

so hedged in by subtle influences; the web which men call chance is of so mysterious a warp! Allow me to tell you of a case which happened under my own observation.'

But Isabel had heard enough. What was such a discussion to her that it should have drawn her to listen with a strained interest? She could bear it no longer. In the belief that the two speakers were too much absorbed to notice her absence, she wandered out into the hall; the vexed subject haunting her with a vague oppression, falling as it did upon those other circumstances which, in themselves unusual, were sufficiently disturbing. It did not seem possible to stay there playing her part calmly, as though no urgent question of life and death had found its unwelcome way into her brain. What was happening in the park just then? What malevolent spirit had drawn out Godfrey Redfern on that September night?

Oh! if all the game in all the Squire's covers were gone past recovery, what would it matter, compared to that grave dread which hung like a cloud over the moonlight!

If they did meet; if George Redfern encountered his half-brother with the passion of rage and disappointment she had seen unabated; encountered him suddenly, unexpectedly; what might happen?

A blessing on the volunteer musicians who kept the pianos going, so that she might not be missed! If she had only dared to go out herself into the park and search! Action of any kind would be better than this silent misery of waiting. And then she looked down at her light dress, and thought of it amongst the dewy grass; thought of it in the thickets of a coppice which she knew well; and which rose up before her in this vague terror with the human footsteps of a Cain flying from it, and blood on the trodden grass.

A step on the gravel, slow and measured; the step of a man full of thought; and she sprang forward, and leaned against the door-post.

'Godfrey!'

But for that cry he might have passed on without seeing her, in his abstraction. His hair had fallen over his eyes, and he had no hat; and he looked at her hazily, as though struggling with some distant image which had shut out the present.

'Isabel! my love!'

And then his face cleared a little and a light came into it half tender, half reproachful.

'Was it the gun, and the poachers? Little coward! Ah, Isabel! what is it worth, think you, to a lonely fellow such as I am—was I mean?'

'Godfrey, your sleeve is all wet, and your hair; your coat is muddy, and your cheek—what have you done to your cheek?'

'Is it bleeding? I had a fall, Isabel, in the coppice above the beeches. Never mind. A bit of plaster will set all right, and my coat is easily changed.'

'And your hat, Godfrey?'

'Have I lost it? So I have. Say nothing about it in there, Isabel; they will ask questions. Some time, I will tell you about my fall, but not to-night. Why, Isabel, you are trembling still. What is it?'

And Isabel looking up at him did not utter the name which had been on her lips. She could not tell him what it was that George had said to her, neither could she say 'It was no fear of poachers that troubled me, but a fear more terrible still. I feared lest George should murder you in his ungoverned rage.'

'Let me pass,' said Godfrey, pressing his damp cheek upon her forehead. 'And go in now, my best treasure; they will miss you.'

CHAPTER III.

Why had they not left to the dark pool its secret, undisturbed? What prying eyes had spied it out; why, of all places in the world, was this quiet house the one chosen for those stealthy feet to enter with their ghastly burden; and why had not George Redfern's dead lips unclosed to refute this monstrous calumny; this horrible lie!

So dark a cloud had come over the Hall, suddenly; so intolerable a trial upon Isabel, that it seemed to

her as if the daylight itself must be false and the whole tale a dream. It could not be true. A brave, innocent man; generous all his life to an unthankful step-brother; they could not mean that people were to believe this most iniquitous lie!

'Take courage, Isabel. Be brave, my own!' They were his words; but how long it seemed since he spoke them! How terribly long since she had seen him! Was she ever to see him again! His own! In life or death his own; but which was it to be?

Isabel had no bravery left. Great crises are so apt to take us unprepared. All our lives perhaps we have been preparing for something, but not this; not this which has fallen upon us now:—this is intolerable; only let it be removed and we will suffer anything. She too had been prepared, as she thought, for something on that night of anxious watching for Godfrey, but not this.

The subject which had caused her so inexplicable an oppression that night came back with terrible significance now: the Colonel's calm tones were for ever in her ear, with their unmoved testimony to the condemning power of that circumstantial evidence which had acquired so fearful an interest for her. Tales bearing upon it had begun to float through her brain; hysterical speculations as to whether or not a man would be hanged in such a case as this; and mixed up with them that strange night, the open window, Godfrey's wet sleeve and bleeding cheek: a mass of ghostly remembrance which would leave her suddenly to combat again and again her own disbelief in the monstrous truth that Godfrey, her Godfrey, was under arrest—to take his trial for the murder of his half-brother, George Redfern.

And she herself was about to stand forth and bear witness—against him, or for him; how did she know which? How did she know what such a wisdom as could look in his face and still suspect him might make out of her words, whatever they were? Who had done this deed? Was it, as Godfrey suggested, a suicide, or had

some unknown hand in reality sent George Redfern to his death; and in either case, was there any hope of discovering the truth?

None, so far.

At the entrance to the coppice above the beeches the brothers had met; at the opposite end of the same coppice there had been a struggle, if indeed that might be called a struggle which consisted only of self-defence against a violent attack. This was Godfrey's own tale. Knowing nothing of his brother's visit to the house, he had refrained from telling Isabel the story on the night of its occurrence; and he had not known anything of his brother's fate until the strange bearers met him, and uncovered before him the dead man's face.

But the coppice was close to the pool; the ground was trodden with footmarks, signs of the struggle, which Godfrey never denied; and on the very brink of the pool was found the elder brother's missing hat.

That no marks of violence had been discovered on the body proved nothing, since a sudden push would have effected the thing as surely as a violent blow, and it was well known that the younger Redfern could not swim.

All was against Godfrey. What could the Squire testify, except, indeed, to his knowledge of the lifelong ill-will between the brothers; to the quarrel which had terminated their intercourse two years ago, in that very coppice when they had been fellow-guests of his own?

What could Isabel say in Godfrey's favour, except that he was dearer to her than life? They would not spare him for that; these heartless accusers of an innocent man.

As to the Squire, the whole affair was so enormous, so impossible, according to his ideas, that he half expected to be roused up suddenly from a fit of nightmare. With a crestfallen looking back upon his theory, that an honest English gentleman could be in no real danger from circumstantial evidence, he could but confess that the case had an ugly appearance. Frightful that it should be so; that Godfrey Redfern, in whose praise a thousand

lips would unclose, in his own neighbourhood as well as here, should yet be in danger. It was true that many lips would speak in his praise, but none could deny the fact of the enmity between the half-brothers. And the Squire had now to discover, chafing at the inevitable toils which seemed to be gathering closer about the young man, that it was totally useless to assert his own belief in an innocence of which the law demanded proof. It was useless to cry out 'Godfrey Redfern never told a lie in his life!' What did the immovable calmness of the personated law care for that? And worse than useless to vociferate that the younger brother had been a much more likely subject to commit murder than the elder.

The Squire might, in fact, look round his broad acres, upon his good name, his position and character, and find how impotent they were to save his friend, soon to have been his son by marriage.

And it added to his exasperated sense of injury to find that even his evidence, sifted, seemed to contain rather a cold-blooded acquiescence in the justice of the accusations, than any proof of the innocence of the accused.

According to his own admission, the brothers were not on friendly terms; probably they never met without quarrelling, and had more than once been known to exchange blows; and they had not met since the last fierce encounter in the coppice at Beechwood, two years ago, until the night of the supposed murder. As to the assertion that the younger Redfern was more likely to be guilty of violence than the elder, that fell to the ground harmless; since, George being dead, it could only prove, if it proved anything at all, that in the use of such violence his arm had been weaker than his brother's.

The Squire's head keeper had deposed to having seen the two Redferns enter the coppice; they had been using what he called 'high words,' and one of them had said distinctly, 'It is the last time for one of us.' Cross-examined, he could not be sure which of them made

use of that speech. He knew both of them well, as most people about Beechwood did; they resembled each other both in person and voice; he fancied that the voice was Mr. Godfrey Redfern's, but could not swear to that. He had not followed them, as it might seem natural to suppose he would do. It was generally understood that they were not on good terms, and he had thought it probable that nothing unusual would result from their meeting. Besides which, he was aware that at the time there were poachers abroad, and he had his duty to attend to. Some time later in the evening he had met Mr. Godfrey Redfern returning alone from the coppice, and had mentioned the coincidence to his wife as strange. Cross-examined by Mr. Redfern's counsel, he did not know what time it was when he met the elder brother returning, neither could he be sure that Mr. Redfern came straight from the coppice; he came from that direction.

The testimony of the Squire's daughter had added nothing to the hopefulness of Godfrey's case. The excitement, indeed, seemed to reach its height, and the throng its greatest density, during her brief examination; but the cross-questioning about the time of the supposed murderer's return; the state of his dress—his manner and words—was pitilessly uncompromising, even in the respectful compassion which softened the questioner's voice, and made his marks of interrogation less sharp. And then there had occurred a little bustle in the crowd as the Squire went to take care of his daughter, who had fainted; and perhaps the general excitement and expectancy received rather a stimulus than a quietus from that casualty.

There seemed, however, to be little doubt as to the result of the trial. Godfrey Redfern had met his brother in the coppice, had been heard to use threatening language; the significant remark had been made that 'it was the last time for one of the two'—time had proved which one. At that end of the coppice nearest the pool there were marks of a desperate struggle, and

it had been proved that Mr. Godfrey Redfern left the coppice alone. Mr. Redfern, the elder, asserted that his half-brother had taken him by surprise and felled him to the ground; that he, Godfrey, was stunned for the space of some seconds, he could not say exactly how long; that when he did recover himself he had looked round for his brother, but failed to see anything of him. He was then so dizzy from the fall that he had to cling to a tree for some time before he could stand upright. He never saw his brother alive afterwards.

It was, however, remarkable that Godfrey should have returned bare-headed, and, by his own admission, unconscious of the loss of his hat, and that the hat should have been found on the brink of the pool, which he stated he had never reached. A feeling of suffocation began to creep over the Squire as a voice in the crowd muttered eagerly, 'He'll be hanged for all he's a gent, as sure as his name's Redfern;' and another responded, 'Unless they make it manslaughter.' And then all at once he was conscious of a hand insinuating itself over his arm, and a bit of soiled paper was pushed at him. The next moment he had left the court.

CHAPTER IV.

'All we want is your promise that you will take no advantage of anything we may say to hurt us.'

'Is it about Mr. Redfern?'

'Your promise first, sir.'

'Promise! of course I promise. Good God, men, if you know anything to right the innocent, how on earth can you stand to barter about it?'

'We must look to ourselves, and we have wives and children, Squire. You have promised, however; and even if it concerned a bit of poaching, you wouldn't hurt a man for doing you a good turn?'

The Squire made an impatient gesture.

'Well, then, I was there; we were both there, in the park, that night.'

'Go on.'

'We were in hiding from the

keeper. We are not regular poachers, Squire, though I dare say you'll always suspect us now; but we were hard up. The gun you heard was mine: it went off unawares. I'm not used to a gun, and I was dragging it through a hedge after me, full cocked. The report scared us a bit, but we thought perhaps it mightn't be noticed, and after we had got away from the place we agreed to wait a bit and see if anything happened, for, as I said before, we were hard up, and there wasn't a morsel to eat in my house. We got into the bushes by the big pool. Once or twice we thought we heard voices, but the wind carried them away. All at once a man came out of the copse towards the pool. "Keep close," my mate whispered; "it's young Redfern from the Hall."

'Mr. Godfrey Redfern?' interrupted the Squire.

'At first I thought it was, but he came close to us, and the moon shone full on his face all at once out of a cloud, and I saw that it was Mr. George.'

'You will swear that?'

'I'll swear it wasn't Mr. Godfrey, for Mr. Godfrey's alive, and that chap isn't. He came pretty close to the bushes, and he was looking wild like and talking to himself. And all at once he turned his face up to the sky, and said, quite loud, "God forgive me, if there is a God." Them's the very words, for I've heard them in my dreams since, many time. And then he threw up his arms, and there was a splash.'

'You saw all this,' cried the Squire, excitedly, 'and yet made no attempt to save him!'

'Well, I did do just that. My mate was for darting out, but I held him back. Just you look at it, sir: how did I know but what the keepers might come up at any minute? We had no business in the park at all, and if a man has got a name for poaching, there's nothing people wouldn't suspect him of. Over and above being caught with a gun, it would have been awkward for either of us to be found meddling with a drowning man. Anyhow, I didn't fancy risking it.'

'And you held in your hands the

clearing up of this horrible story, and yet waited to be sure I would look over the poaching before you would tell it!

'We didn't know it was going to turn out this way; the general notion was that Mr. Redfern would get off, and then we should have peached upon ourselves for nothing. As soon as we dared we went out of the bushes, but the body must have sunk like lead, for there was no sign of it. As we went through the copse I stumbled over something, and stooped to look what was there: it was a hat. I thought, if it belonged to the drowned man, I'd rather have nothing to do with it, so I pitched it after him towards the pool. That's all, sir, and we are ready to tell it wherever you like.'

CHAPTER V.

Saved!

A great shouting and uproar, a triumphal procession, from which Godfrey would fain have hidden, and at which the poor Squire cast looks of mingled wonder and satisfaction. It certainly was all wonderfully like an ugly dream. The whole thing had a certain element of unreality about it of which he could not yet rid himself. That Godfrey Redfern should actually have been arrested and tried for murder, escaping only at the last moment, when his condemnation seemed inevitable. That he, the Squire of Beechwood, should have been on the spot, firm in his own conviction of Godfrey's innocence, and yet powerless to help him in

the slightest degree. It was prodigious! It seemed like a judgment upon the contemptuous security with which he had argued about such cases.

And then the shouting people set the bells of the principal town church to ring, and Godfrey leaned back in the Squire's carriage and hid his face.

Those bells must have fallen like a melodious blessing upon Isabel, waiting in dull misery for the verdict, looking with hopeless eyes upon the spires and chimneys of the town wherein the light of her life threatened to go out. For surely some miracle must have saved him, or joy-bells like those would never sound in her ears to mock her misery. Never were bells so beautiful before; never was the roll of wheels so musical an accompaniment.

And at the hall-door, long after Godfrey had rushed away from his congratulations, the Squire halted, listening with a somewhat rueful face to the felicitations of his old friend and tormentor.

Colonel Cardan.—'I confess that the case had assumed a threatening aspect. From my heart I sympathize with you.'

Squire Bourne.—'Colonel, you are a generous man: you were right and I was wrong. But for the testimony of two rascally poachers the case would have been lost. You are right; we are but helpless creatures, after all, and the web which men call chance is a mysterious and fearful power.'

PASSAGES FROM THE FAMILY HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH ARISTOCRACY.

I.—THE CAVENDISHES—(*concluded*).

THE young and lovely E. S., when Lady Cavendish, was made aware that she was mortal by a fortune-teller, who, Horace Walpole declares, assured her that her death could not happen whilst she continued building; so she set about to employ much of her great wealth in that way; and died during a hard frost, when the workmen could not proceed. This tradition may be true; but at the same time we must remember that our rich countrymen had, in those days, no channel in which to employ and get an interest for their money, except land and houses.

E. S. raised, however, this lasting trophy to her grandeur. Let us take a walk through the rooms and galleries of Hardwick Hall, and call up the images of those who have done the same before us, not as casual visitors, but as sojourners in the land.

E. S. is in her second nuptials; the place is full of the race who still own Hardwick, and the name of Cavendish—probably called ‘Caundish,’ since it is often so spelt—is heard in yonder tapestried hall. We pass into the dining-room: here is Elizabeth Lady Cavendish, in all her beauty, dressed, however, simply, in a close black gown; above it, a double ruff: her sleeves, turned up with small white cuffs, come down to her very hands. Around her throat she wears a double row of pearls reaching to her waist. Her brown hair is uncovered, although she is for the second time a wife, and now a mother. Sir William—the trusted friend of Wolsey, and her very humble servant—is near her, in a fur gown, with a small flat cap on his head; he wears a long pointed beard and whiskers. According to the custom of the day he carries a glove in his left hand; he is, in that respect, in the very pink of fashion. The children of the house, two sons and three daughters, are in the august presence of their parents—for parents were august

in those days. The great height of this room, more than any ornaments, gives it dignity, for the diamond-paned windows are not painted: fretted roofs and painted glass are gone out of date in this, the sixteenth century, and bad tapestry and poor pictures, to quote Horace Walpole (without, indeed, *quite* agreeing with him), have replaced the rich *meubles* of old date.

Elizabeth of Hardwick is here surrounded with a family full of promise. Every worldly blessing attends her; and she has a husband as fond of building as herself. Sir William, after all his toil and troubles, is beginning that noble structure at Chatsworth which his wife completed. It is by her advice—and she always won the day over her four husbands—that he has begun that noble mansion on an estate at Chatsworth, bought from the ancient family of Leech, one of whom married a sister of Elizabeth’s.

Years have elapsed; and with them William Cavendish has also passed away, and is seen no more. Of his last moments—the last moments of one whom every one trusted, and whom even Wolsey loved—we find no trace. Let us go back to Hardwick, for the annals of his descendants are, at all events, to be found there. Let us take a peep into the annals of the year 1587.

The arms of Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, are over the chimney in the great hall at Hardwick now, and beneath them, in a lozenge, was this inscription, afterwards added:—‘The conclusion of all things is to fear God and keep his commandments. E. S. 1597.’ We hope she really thought and felt what she thus endorsed with her famous E. S., but we are by no means certain of the fact.

Behold E. S. herself. She looks older; she is somewhat careworn; she has still her favourite black dress; she adheres to the double row of pearls; she has the ruff with hollow plaits. But time is telling

its unpleasant tales; and E. S., in her *fourth* nuptials, wears over her hair a figured gauze veil, brought over the head to the forehead in a point, but leaving the sides open: is it to hide grey hairs?

But fierce passions are expressed on that once fair brow—temper, disgust, jealousy. Yet she had everything she could wish for in life. Estates from her first husband, Master Robert Barley; respectability and an honourable position with Sir William Cavendish; additional wealth from Sir William St. Loo, who left her all he could to the prejudice of his children by a former marriage; and now, exalted rank from her fourth trial of matrimony, in her union with George, eighth Earl of Shrewsbury, Earl Marshal of England. And, in addition to all this, E. S. has led exactly the life suited to her masculine capacity. She has been a buyer and seller of land; she has been a money-lender, and knows how to exact hard bargains; she is a farmer: my lady the countess buys and sells sheep and cows, and even pigs; and deals in coals and timber. Alas! for her; every bad passion has been fostered by her awful prosperity; and now, in the decline of her life, to her avarice, her pride, her furious temper, her indomitable self-will, is added the canker, jealousy.

She paces that hall, the work of her own dread of death, and love of brick and mortar. We see her in fancy there: her eye turns in jealous, furtive glances to a closed and bolted postern door: she opens it, and ascends a stone staircase, leading to the gallery of a chapel, through which my lady countess must needs pass before she comes to the second story of her quaint house. The chapel is in deep gloom: perchance, as the countess moves on, her foot touches a cushion, her arm displaces a chair. She shrinks as if hurt; that cushion, that chair are used, E. G. knows it, by the captive above, in that upper story. There kneels the now fragile, long-immured form of a queen. Broken sighs are heard in that dark gallery; heart-wrung prayer is whispered by the pale lips of that exquisite face

which is buried in that cushion's velvet covering. At matins, at even-song, there sits one on whom none could look without love and pity; and she, who now pauses with a choking of passion, knows it. There (but the countess has passed out)—there is the seat of the royal Mary Stuart.

For fifteen years that hapless being had been in captivity; but the hardest durance she suffered was at Hardwick. What matters it to say, that the rooms fitted up for the Scottish queen were most magnificent? that the hangings in her bedchamber are of cloth of gold, cloth of silver, of velvet, enriched with fringes and embroidery? What matters it that, on the bed-hangings, are figures large as life, one adoring the cross, others denoting the virtues—Chastity, Liberality, Perseverance, and Patience? A little kindness would have been far more valuable than all this almost taunting splendour: but to kindness Mary Stuart had long been a stranger. We can imagine the secret reflections of E. S., as she traverses the long gallery on the second story to seek the captive queen. Elizabeth, her ladyship's queen, had of late attempted to curtail the allowance of fifty-two pounds per week allowed for the maintenance of Mary, who was thus boarded, with her retinue, by the earl and countess; and Lord Shrewsbury, sick of the burdensome charge, disgusted with the pitiful reduction, had sought to be discharged from his care of Mary Stuart. And to this he had been driven, partly by the violent jealousy of his lady wife, and partly by the vulgar fear of being done, to use a vulgarism, by Queen Elizabeth.

And, as the haughty countess walks onward, Walsingham's famous letter to Queen Elizabeth, given by Miss Strickland from the 'Complete Ambassador,' may recur to readers of this day.

'I pray God that the abatement of the charges towards that nobleman, that hath the custody of the *bosom serpent* (meaning Mary Queen of Scots), hath not lessened his care in keeping of her. To think that a man of his birth and ability, after

twelve] years' travail, in charge of such a weight, to have an abatement of allowance, and no recompence otherwise made, should not breed discontentment. No man that hath reason can so judge; and therefore, to have so special a charge committed to a person discontented, everybody seeth, it standeth no way with policy.*

The earl appears, however, to have been worthy of the important trust; he was kind to the hapless prisoner; his conduct, we are told, was as honourable as it was innocent. But to return to the countess, where, in imagination, we left her.

She is in the gallery, which ranges the whole length of the east front: it is a hundred and twenty-five feet in length, lighted by windows in deep recesses which project beyond the wall. Her patroness, Queen Elizabeth—she to whom Lady Shrewsbury had once, during the lifetime of her third husband, St. Loo, been lady of the bedchamber—seems to watch her as she goes; Elizabeth, with those cold grey eyes, that golden hair on her white, high brow, was staring at her: and that sharp, clever, merciless face, that never once expressed a womanly feeling, was likely to stimulate the deep vengeance of Lady Shrewsbury's heart. The very dress—a gown, tight, without a fold, and painted with serpents, birds, and a sea horse—what taste!—may have recalled some allegorical piece in which the vain Elizabeth had figured, and in which her namesake, E. S., had fed her royal mistress's self-adoration.

Be that as it may: what portrait is it that next rivets the attention of Lady Shrewsbury? Is it that of Lady Jane Grey, at her harpsichord, and psalm-book in hand? Or the youthful pair, James V. of Scotland, and his wife, with their long, thin faces and yellow hair? Or is it that mournful countenance that, in spite of those exquisite features, presents such a wreck of beauty? Is it Mary Stuart? Can it be she whose peculiar loveliness and contour is still a standard among us? The countess gazes, and a fiend-like

gratification lights up her face. Yes: it is Mary: that haggard face: the limner, whoever he may be, has done his work well: he has depicted her in the tenth year of her captivity, unflatteringly, for it were almost treason to flatter poor Mary Stuart now: he has given to posterity the prisoner, and not the queen. Thus, in telling words, wrote Anne Radcliffe about this picture: 'Her countenance much faded, deeply marked by indignation and grief; and reduced as to the spectre of herself, frowning with suspicion on all who approached it; the black eyes looking out of their corners: thin lips, somewhat aquiline nose, and beautiful chin. Ten years, ten such years had done their work.' Compare this portrait with that which was once in the Bodleian at Oxford: there, Mary Stuart, with a calm aspect, looked almost lovingly on you as you gazed on her; for it was difficult not to fancy that she was actually there. All trace of that famous likeness is gone; it perished from too much knowledge, too much inquiry. Once there hung on those time-stained walls a fair oval face, so perfect in symmetry, that one was fain to say it was too regular. It was Mary, at the age of twenty-four, woman's perfection. Her hair is parted under that pointed cap of lace, stiffened and yellow starched, and a long veil, or wimple, which she always wore after her marriage, hangs down behind. The clear brow has not one line of care on its marble arch, where, it would seem, innocence, 'pure as moonlight sleeping upon snow,' was pictured. The long, almond-shaped eyes which looked 'black,' to Mrs. Radcliffe, were of a soft hazel,—quiet, but with a latent fire in their orbs. They were scarcely sunk beneath the pencilled and arched eyebrow. The nose was so slightly aquiline that one could scarcely define it; and the chin, most delicate, most beautiful, rested upon the double ruff of delicate lace below. Her dress was black, with sleeves slashed with white; over those slender shoulders hung a rosary and crucifix of gold and ebony; and with which still hang-

* Strickland, vol. vii. p. 4.

ing round her neck she met her doom.*

Such Mary was: but that model of womanly beauty exists no longer. Some years ago, Sir David Wilkie, visiting the Bodleian, saw that picture. He asked for a pair of steps; he wished to examine it. He felt sure, he said, that there was another portrait beneath it. Alas! he was right. He was allowed to try the experiment of washing the surface. The portrait was painted on wood. He washed it; and presently Mary's sweet eyes, her brow, her exquisite mouth disappeared. A somewhat comely but vulgar face beneath a coif, appeared: Wilkie washed on; and not a vestige was left of Mary, queen of my soul; but there came out a complete face and half-length figure of one who looked somewhat like a foster-sister of Queen Mary, passing like, but with every feature vulgarized. It now reigns triumphant as a portrait of Mary. To return to the gallery, to the living Mary, and to the hating, maligning Lady Shrewsbury. She goes on, towards the room of audience. It is of uncommon loftiness; below, the walls are covered with tapestry; above, painted with historical groups. We cannot agree with Horace Walpole in preferring low rooms. There is a grandeur in the height of this room of sad remembrance. Some of the chairs are of black velvet, nearly concealed by raised needle-work of gold, and silver, and colours, forming a covering of great richness; others are much older than Mary's time, and even in her time were tattered. Curtains of gold tissue decorate the windows: at the upper end of this presence-chamber a canopy of black velvet serves to keep up the phantom of royalty; beneath it, raised on steps, are two chairs: a carpeted table, and some articles of furniture used by Mary, stand in a wide recess below the steps.

She is not here: the queen keeps her chamber. Lady Shrewsbury opens a door; pauses for a time before a window in the passage be-

yond. That window commands a view into the bedroom of Mary Stuart. From that window all her movements can be watched. It can be known that the bird is in its cage; it can be certified that no Lord Shrewsbury is lounging in those richly embroidered chairs of black velvet, worked by Mary's own hand. Lady Shrewsbury's throbbing heart may, as it happens, be stilled by her furtive inspection, or it may be worked into frenzy. Many an oath—for, like her royal mistress, E. S. swore glibly—has slipped out in that short passage, and before that fatal window; and scandals, which brought matters almost to the verge of a criminal prosecution, were generated, whilst the countess crept stealthily in, like a hyæna, with the deadliest malice in her very heart's core.

'How fares my cousin the Queen of Scots?' was Queen Elizabeth's question one day when Lady Shrewsbury was at court.

'Madame,' was the reply, 'she cannot do ill whilst she is with my husband; and I begin to grow jealous, they are so great together.' The words seemed to be spoken in jest, but were uttered in bitter earnest.

All this time the countess's son, by the excellent Sir William Cavendish, was growing up amid these family cabals, and playing about Hardwick with the children of their stepfather. These very children Lady Shrewsbury had endeavoured, before her marriage to their father, to injure. She had tried to persuade the earl to settle his large estates on herself; but she could not succeed; so she insured that some portion should come into her family by marrying Henry, her eldest son, to the Lady Grace Talbot, the earl's youngest daughter; and, at the same time, her own youngest daughter to Gilbert, afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury, and his father's heir, though only a second son. William, her second son, and the first of the Cavendishes promoted to the peerage, also derived advantage from his mother's union with Lord Shrewsbury; for by the earl's advice he received an excellent edu-

* The crucifix and rosary are preserved in the Bedingfield family. It was to one of their ancestors that Mary gave it.

cation, and he became worthy of the name which was already so honourable in his country.

Great as Lord Shrewsbury was, prosperous as all the united families were, Hardwick must have been a pandemonium so long as Queen Mary's pale, sad face was seen in the range of her splendid prison. 'Lord Shrewsbury,' says Miss Strickland, 'was rendered by his wife's jealousy the most miserable of men.' Again and again he petitioned to be released from a charge which had exposed him to so much calumny; and at length his request was granted. The 'bosom serpent,' as Walsingham called Mary, although the two queens had never met in their lives, was removed to another of the earl's seats. The gloomy castle of Tutbury, selected because it was the dampest, the dreariest, and the most disliked by Mary of any castle in England, received her as its inmate; and the stately chambers of Hardwick were at liberty for the haughty, but appeased countess to inhabit; her house was her own. Tutbury, it is true, belonged to Lord Shrewsbury; but he gave it up to the superintendence of Sir Amias Paulet, who had henceforth the charge of Queen Mary.

But the countess had lighted that 'little fire' which 'kindleth a great matter.' She had set the busy on to talk. Her husband died before her; and his executors, probably at his request, thought it necessary to inscribe upon his tomb a denial of that criminal attachment for Mary Stuart, with which he had been charged by his enemies.

He died in 1590; and the countess, or, as her foes called her, Bess of Hardwick, went on with her schemes and her building. She did not like her eldest son Henry so well as her second; so she gave him the damp old fort of Tutbury of tragic memories; but William, her favourite, was well provided for in her life-time; and amongst the possessions which he inherited were Hardwick and Chatsworth. Nothing shows the advantage of a continuance of one family in a property more plainly than the state of Hardwick Hall.

There it stands, a memento of the times that witnessed its erection. It takes us back again to the Cavendishes and Talbots of those days; to Mary Stuart; to her persecutor, Elizabeth Tudor; and to her calumniator, Elizabeth of Hardwick. Such places owe their existence to the much-abused majorat, the abrogation of which has lowered most of the fine old provincial castles in France. Of Mary Stuart, most relics remain: her bed alone—although Mrs. Radcliffe seems not to have known it when she wrote her account of Hardwick—was taken away by the rebels during the civil war.

During seventeen years Lady Shrewsbury survived the husband whom she had so cruelly tormented—perhaps into his grave, who knows? Who knows even what the former three husbands may not have suffered from this female Bluebeard? Four victims to slip away! Her tongue must have done it. Yet, if we are to believe post-mortem eulogies, E. S. left the world a pattern of all the virtues. Dr. Toby Mathew, Archbishop of York, preached her funeral sermon, and eulogized her many shining qualities; and Bishop Kennet, in his 'Memoirs of the Cavendish Family,' in courtly phrase touches upon her life of unexampled prosperity.

'A change of condition,' he says, 'that perhaps never fell to any one woman, to be four times a creditable and happy wife; to rise by every husband into greater wealth and higher honours; to have a unanimous issue by one husband only; to have all those children live, and all, by her advice, be honourably and creditably disposed of in her life-time; and, after all, to live seventeen years a widow, in absolute power and plenty.'

Nothing, however, can wipe out the blots in the character of Elizabeth of Hardwick. She had great opportunities, and she forgot that all property is a trust, and that the Great Steward of all requires an account of it; not such an account as will show that we neglected not our children's worldly interests, or that we improved their estates, or that

we arranged their marriages, and set our whole hearts on achieving their prosperity; but the stern and solemn account of the works of mercy done in His name, and for His sake, who tells us, in his ever-living words, 'The poor ye have always with you.'

Let us, however, do such justice as we can to Lady Shrewsbury. We are told she was charitable; and Bishop Kennet adds that she was not unmindful of those in want. Witness, he says (but, in proportion to her mass of wealth, the witness speaks but little), her endowment of a 'noble hospital' (we have seen it, and do not call it 'noble') 'at Derby, for the entertainment of twelve poor people, who have each about ten pounds a year for their subsistence.'

Witness—if you wish to bring forth instances of high-born ladies, ministering angels—witness what, in our days, Miss Burdett Coutts has done, in these days of fluctuation, of income tax, of luxury, and submit, O shade of Bishop Kennet! to be answered, that we indeed call not the countess, charitable. Give her her due. During a life of ninety years she built three of the most elegant gentleman's seats, as they then were, in England—Chatsworth, Hardwick, and Oldcote. She also took care to erect another structure: she built her own tomb. In All Saints' Church, at Derby, there is a splendid mural monument, the design and execution of which she herself superintended—no bad amusement for an old millionaire! In a recess in the lower part lies the figure of the countess, dressed in the habit of the times. Her head is lying on a cushion, her hands are uplifted in the attitude of prayer. Much need! Yet let us not be uncharitable: to her we owe the continuance of a truly noble, truly admirable race. She perpetuated the Cavendishes; she bequeathed to them their great possessions, without leaving the legacy of her bad passions. Peace be to her! Could we forget Mary Queen of Scots, we could forgive E. S.; but, as we strive to do so, the image of that favourite of nature rises before us. We see her in her life-long misery; some time at Chatsworth, some time at Hardwick; once or twice taken, 'for me-

lancholy,' with Lord and Lady Shrewsbury to the fashionable baths at Buxton. There she calls up to her mournful memory *Cæsar's* verses upon Felton, thus given:—

'Buxton, whose fame thy milk-warm waters tell,

Whom I perhaps no more shall see, farewell!'

We see her at Chatsworth, where Lady Shrewsbury built a fine house, which was taken down at the close of the seventeenth century, and where thirteen years of Mary's captivity were spent; but the rooms which now bear her name were built on the site only of those which the unhappy queen inhabited. Let us not follow her to Tutbury or to Fotheringay, else our sentiments of detestation towards Bess of Hardwick, who could embitter so much of the hapless existence so soon to be tragically closed, should effervesce, and upset the dignity of history; and we should be tempted to blot out every word—and the task would not be a long one—that we have written in her favour.

Her descendants did honour to the name of Cavendish, a name which we never find in history coupled with a base action; for it is remarkable that a certain nobleness of nature has seemed to characterize them all. But to return to the children of E. S. William, Lady Shrewsbury's second son, was created Baron Cavendish after the death of his elder brother, and afterwards Earl of Devonshire. The far-off islands of Bermuda still retain among them the name of Cavendish, in honour of his efforts to settle their government and affairs. His son William, the second earl, inherited his father's noble and generous temper. The pupil of Hobbes, this gifted man was learned without pedantry; kind, hospitable, sincere; a neighbour and a friend to all who merited that honour. His estate fell into difficulties, and his wife, Lady Christian Bruce, the sister of Thomas Earl of Elgin, managed his affairs so well as to retrieve them. She extricated him from several threatened lawsuits. 'Madam,' said Charles the Second to her, 'you have all my judges at your disposal.' Lord Digby called her 'the best woman, and the best-bred

woman in the nation : ' she has all the complaisance of the court, without the least affectation ; and all the strictness of religion in her conduct, without the least pretence to it in her discourse.'

Her son—another William, and third earl—was one of the handsomest and most accomplished noblemen of his time, and the suitor of Lady Dorothea Sydney, the Sacharissa of Waller ; but his suit was not successful. To him, on his coming of age, all the great houses in Derbyshire owned by his family were delivered, completely furnished, by his mother. He was, like all his race, though loyal, a sturdy patriot. He disapproved of the attainder of Strafford, and he followed the fortunes of Charles I.

His tutor was Thomas Hobbes, the famous philosopher. Together had they travelled into Italy, and there seen Galileo. After their return the earl, though detesting Hobbes's religious views, had him to live in ease and plenty at Chatsworth, where his life was henceforth passed.

To the strangers who visited at the hall, Hobbes paid his morning visits as if he had not been living in the house. His spare, tall figure, wrapped up in flannel, might be seen walking early in the gallery, beginning his rounds. His face was handsome, his eyes sharp and piercing ; a bright colour tinged his cheeks ; his hair, till a late period, was black, with a thick and yellowish moustache on his lip. His temper was open and confiding ; he loved to communicate knowledge ; and must, in fact, have been a very agreeable savant, of dangerous, if not absolutely infidel opinions. He was a bachelor, and remained so, in spite of all the perils of these antechambers in which youth and beauty loitered—in spite, too, of his not being exempt, as we are told, from amorous failings. Such was Hobbes, who, by the regularity of his hours, and by the infinite care which he took of himself, by his twelve-o'clock dinners, by his long walks, and by playing at hard ball after he was seventy, preserved health till ninety-two. Those who wish to study his

plans for health will be struck with the similarity which those of Dr. Andrew Combe bear to them. It must, however, be confessed that he smoked a little, and ate no supper : nor can we dare wholly to disbelieve that the author of ' The Leviathan ' was afraid of ghosts.

Such was Hobbes. He would have been an Oxford Essayist and Reviewer had he lived in our times. In his own, he was reputed an atheist ; yet we are expressly told by Bishop Kennet that Hobbes believed in the Reformed Church, ' but thought it more reverent and pious to believe in God than to pretend to comprehend him.'

For years before his death the hand that wrote ' The Leviathan ' was shaking with palsy ; yet it was only when told by his physician at the last that no perfect cure could, on account of his great age, be expected, that he seemed to anticipate death. ' Then,' said he, ' I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of the world at.'

And here let us pause. In enumerating the descendants of William Cavendish, the gentleman usher of Wolsey, we have but to repeat the same expressions : liberality, loyalty, magnanimity, are, as it were, stereotyped in our pages for the express service of this honoured race. Good fortune seems also a term fitted for this family, if not made for them. At last there comes a break in the Williams ; and Charles Cavendish, a cavalier of the finest qualities, a cousin of our latest William, appears at the court of Whitehall. He is the king's godson, as handsome a youth as ever trod a measure or fought in a field of battle. He could do both well ; and he was witty, loyal, honourable, sensible, and valiant *aux ongles*.

Young Charles Cavendish rode in Lord Bernard Stuart's troop when the king, to whom he had offered his services, was at York ; and Charles remarked, that those who composed this troop were so rich, that their fortunes put together would buy up all the estates of Lord Essex, and of all the officers in the parliamentary army. Charles Cavendish was a gallant youth, and

rose quickly to be lieutenant-general. He had the honour of escorting Henrietta Maria to Newark. When, on that occasion, he waited on her majesty, the commanding officer, Major Tuke, asked the queen for the word; 'Cavendish' was the reply; and the compliment was courteously and reverently owned.

But this gay and eventful life was soon closed; and Cavendish was killed in an engagement with the parliament troops under Cromwell, and died refusing quarter. 'The general,' Cromwell wrote to the Committee of the Associated Counties at Cambridge, 'had been driven into a quagmire, where my captain-lieutenant slew him with a thrust under the short ribs' (just as if he were speaking of the slaying of a bullock!) And so the gallant young cavalier met his doom. The people of Newark, in spite of Cromwell and his captain-lieutenant, or in spite of Colonel Bury, who, they believed, did the deed and was dear to Oliver ever after—these same loyal people of Newark loved the fine-spirited, handsome Charles Cavendish so much (I write it almost with tears), that they could not bear to put that young, noble corpse into the tomb. They kept it above ground many days, and at length committed it in sorrow to the cold grave. Thirty years afterwards their grief was opened afresh. All had become tranquil, and the exemplary mother of the gallant Charles being dead, his descendants wished to remove the body to Derby. Then the grief of the good folks of Newark broke out afresh, as if he had only just been dead. How had he made himself so loved? Waller wrote his epitaph, beginning—

'Here lies Charles Cavendish; let the marble
stone
That hides his ashes make his virtues known;
Beauty and valour did his short life grace,
The grief and glory of his noble race;'

and ending—

'Thus fell the young, the lovely, and the brave,
Strew bays and flowers upon his honour'd
grave.'

Yet Waller's epitaph does not—we fear to confess it—touch the heart.

Three words of real feeling would have done it better.

Let us quit this sad theme, and turn to a gayer scene. The lucky star of the Cavendishes is in the ascendant: another grandson of the original William, Wolsey's gentleman usher, another branch of this great line, is our theme.

Plant yourselves, readers, on the ridge of a bleak hill—a Derbyshire hill—which commands a vast extent of view over one of England's fairest counties. You are in the old territory once possessed by those Peverels—the Peverels of the Peak, whom Scott has rendered so familiar to us. Yon mass of brown stone, square and lofty, and embattled with a tower at each angle—that to the north-east rising far above the others, that is Bolsover. There lived William de Peverel. The structure now standing is not his: the Peverels have long since passed away from their stronghold, the Peak; and Bolsover has become, through Bess of Hardwick, the possession of a Cavendish.

Place yourselves, in imagination, near the building which, though but a castellated house, they call Bolsover Castle. What means that long procession which is winding up the hill?—that noble white horse, with its graceful rider, with the slouch hat and drooping feather, the peaked beard, the pointed delicate moustache, the rich riding suit, upon which the George, suspended by a black ribbon, catches the morning sunbeams, as the cortège turns towards the sunny east?

What mean those acclamations which burst forth from those groups of peasants who stand bareheaded by the wayside? The old walls faintly re-echo the cry, and 'Long live King Charles! Long live his gracious Majesty King Charles the First!' are the sounds which, carried aloft in the calm summer air, startle yon colony of rooks as the procession passes onwards.

By either side of a flight of stone steps which lead into the hall are ranged household retainers. On those steps, bareheaded, stands the brave, the accomplished, the loyal William Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle, of the younger branch of our

first William's lineage. Like all his family, he is a model of courtesy, intellectual, and even learned; yet to all appearance—and it is a great charm in him—he conceals the scholar in the fine gentleman. His countess, and first wife, the mother of a hopeful half-dozen—three of them sons, three of them daughters—stands beside him. With deep reverence they hail their sovereign; and whilst flags are flying, the church bells at Belsover are ringing, and as the acclamations, louder and louder, become mingled with the words, 'Long live our gracious Queen Henrietta Maria!' the whole of the procession comes into sight, turns, halts—Charles, riding with inimitable grace, salutes his faithful lieges, who have gathered from the country far and wide to receive him; whilst the delicate face of Henrietta Maria peeps from out of the litter in which she has made the journey, and with a wave of her fair hand, and with some faint words, in a foreign tone, she thanks the bystanders.

The royal pair have travelled that day only from Welbeck, a seat belonging to Lord Newcastle, which he has given up for their accommodation. They are hailed, as they enter the rude Hall supported by stone pillars, by the hearty acclamations of the higher classes of Lord Newcastle's neighbours, who are invited to meet the king at this famous entertainment. But there was one whom Charles received, as he came bending forward in his rude, uncouth way, with peculiar kindness. Ben Jonson—honest Ben,—when all the notable and lofty personages were there, has his share of royal kindness. He is there to conduct the masque, which his own genius has composed—there to suggest and arrange the scenes, also. Happy Ben! his enemy, Iniquity Jones, is not there to oppose and vex the irritable old poet; and the taste and fancy, which appear so greatly at variance with that rough, coarse exterior, are to have free and fair play for once.

We may picture to ourselves the king and queen seated under a cloth of state in the only apartment designed for habitation on this floor:

it is rude enough; with a stone pillar in the centre, to support a stone roof. Yet rich decorations have concealed the nakedness of the land: all is gorgeously decorated, and music and poetry make up for every deficiency in the mansion. Yet, above stairs, the rooms are small; the stairs and ceiling of stone—cold, gray stone—and the floors of plaster. Our ancestors had, nevertheless, a way of dressing up everything for the moment, and of hiding every defect. 'Hang arras here:' 'Nail up there cloth of gold tissue:' 'Set the cresset-bearers in each dark corner:' 'Let arches of shrubs, and flowers, and the red rose, and the white lily cover yon rude abutment:' 'Fill up yonder corner with a pennon or two.' So can we fancy Ben, at once poet and stage-manager, saying to the scared servants, at whom he swore—for Ben was no saint—in round oaths. Then in the pageant, what rank, what beauty, what grace, and culture were displayed! It is said that in our own pure Court nothing but intelligence will prosper now-a-days; and that, to be appreciated, you must be appreciable. So was it then, when every taste of the king's was refined, and when to enter into these tastes was imperative for courtly success. So we may conceive the happy turns of the poet's wit; the rich dresses of the actors; the delicious music of Lawes and Lanière; the perfection of actors and actresses to have enlivened the afternoon, and to have been the theme of the banquet. Alas! this grand entertainment cost fifteen thousand pounds; and was one of the causes of subsequent embarrassments to the Earl of Newcastle.

His great possessions, amounting to an income of twenty-two thousand pounds yearly, had partly descended to him from his grandmother, the wicked E. S., who had bequeathed to Newcastle's father, her younger son, what she had crimped from Sir William St. Loo's property; and, like much wealth got in that manner, it soon made to itself wings to fly away.

Noble, as well as lavish, was the nature of him who thus magnificently received Charles I.; and that

king well knew the value of Lord Newcastle, and gave his son Charles into the Earl's charge, when the sprightly young prince was taken from the nursery to the school-room. When the wars broke out, Newcastle, hampered with debt as he was, lent the king ten thousand pounds. He was made general of all the forces north of the Trent; but his feats and services, his perils and difficulties, his troubles with the brave, rash Prince Rupert; his despair at last, and his flight to Hamburgh, after the battle of Marston Moor,—these are grave and long details; and, much as we love this *preux chevalier*, we must deny ourselves the recital thereof, and refer the reader to Clarendon. Years have passed. The bright days of the Restoration are come: and Lord Newcastle is at home again. He has lost more than any of the king's faithful lieges: but he is rewarded with the title of Duke of Newcastle, and Earl of Ogle. He has lost nine hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Nevertheless, he has begun a new pile of building at Bolsover, with a gallery (*in petto*) two hundred and twenty feet in length (our ancestors thought nothing of a house without a gallery), and twenty-eight feet wide; but he never completed the structure; and the shell is alone standing. One interesting relic remains, however, of what was intended to be so noble a residence;—a fountain. In an octagon reservoir, six feet deep, at the south end of the garden, is a curious decayed fountain, ornamented with satyrs, masks, birds, and other figures. On the pedestal appears a figure of Venus in alabaster: she is stepping out of the bath, and holding up her drapery. This relic savours more of the time of Charles II. than of his father's grave and proper age.

But, in fact, the first Duke of Newcastle was not only a cavalier in war, but a very merry one in private life. Far be it from us to sully our favourite's fame; but he was no puritan in morals; no saint in buckram.

Among the companions of his youth was Thomas Hobbes, the

author of the 'Leviathan,' and the tutor successively of two of the Cavendish family. Hobbes had, in fact, continued to be a sort of appendage to Chatsworth, where he chiefly lived, but where he refused to die; for, at the age of ninety-two, when his patron, the Earl of Devonshire, removed from Chatsworth to Hardwick, the old man, then ninety-two years of age,—part and parcel of the great establishment,—persisted in being conveyed there on a feather-bed, and died ten days afterwards. Hobbes, it is said, borrowed some of his ideas from the Earl of Newcastle, whom he described as a most accomplished person, great in everything save form. The Earl was, in fact, the patron of the wits in the time of Charles I., without much regard to character or respect to decency. He made Sir William Davenant his lieutenant-general of the ordnance, and the Rev. Mr. Hudson scoutmaster-general of his army; then, when exiled and poor, instead of composing a grave treatise, or an historical piece, he spent his time in breaking-in horses; in studying horsemanship, and writing in French a '*Manuel nouvelle de dresser les chevaux avec des figures*.' He patronized Ben Jonson, and wrote plays himself, in Ben's manner: and he married one of the most amusing and fantastic of women in the world for his second wife; and she wrote his history.

Margaret Lucas, Duchess of Newcastle, has one place in the republic of letters: she is Horace Walpole's pet aversion. The Duke, Horace says, though declared by Lord Clarendon to be 'amorous in poetry and music, was fitter to break Pegasus for a *manège*, than to mount him on the steps of Parnassus.' 'Of all the riders of that steed there have not been a more fantastic couple than his Grace and his faithful Duchess, who is never off her pillion.' Wicked Horace! Dressed, in her portrait at Welbeck, in a very unbecoming fancy costume, with a wreath of laurel round her head, and a garment meant to be classical, but turning out simply untidy, Margaret is a capital specimen

of the high-born *précieuse ridicule* of the Restoration. Her Memoirs of so gifted, so generous, and so valiant a husband, may be pardoned, though, as Walpole says, she sometimes compares him to Julius Cæsar; sometimes tells us in what sort of a coach he went to Amsterdam. 'God,' she declared, 'had commanded his servant, Nature, to endue her with a poetical and philosophic genius, even from her birth, for she did write some books in that kind before she was twelve years of age.' We have not been unhappy enough to read them. She seldom revised the copies of her works, lest it should disturb her following conceptions. Delicious pedant!

Her Grace's works were voluminous, nineteen of her comedies being completed — one of them only, called 'The Blazing World,' being left unfinished; the amusing Duchess 'finding her genius not tend to the prosecution of it.' She wrote not, as we degenerate Britons do, in quartos, or octavos, but in folios. What would she have said to shilling editions? But though Walpole, with his usual sneer, talks of this 'picture of foolish nobility,' we cannot but admire and approve the pursuits which rendered exile supportable, and occupied creditably the leisure of age. The duke and duchess retired to what he calls their 'own little domain;' but that domain comprised, among many other stately residences, Welbeck, and the unfinished Bolsover. So much for Walpole's highly-coloured biography. As a general rule he hates all cavaliers and royalists. Let us leave them, as he says, 'to intoxicate one another' with conjugal flattery, and turn to the first ducal peer of this illustrious house, a William again; and then add a few lines to the obituary of the last.

In 1661, one of the youths who held up the train of Charles II., was William Cavendish, then Earl of Devonshire. He had all the virtues and all the good fortune of his race. But though loyal, he was a patriot, and detested the tyranny of James II. An old farm-house existed not long since, in which he, in company with Lord Delamere,

privately concocted the plan of the Revolution. This farm is at Whittington, on the edge of Scarsdale; and the parlour where these two noblemen sat is still called the 'Plotting parlour;' yet no man of those troublous times was more averse to sedition and conspiracy than this peer. Yet he was a sworn foe to tyranny. When Lord Russell was in prison, it was the generous Cavendish who offered, through Sir James Forbes, to change clothes with him, that he might make his escape. The noble offer was nobly refused; and all that was left for affection to do, was to console the broken-hearted Lady Rachel Russell — her whose eyes were nearly blinded by incessant weeping; and to marry his eldest son to the daughter of his lost friend, a compliment of great significance in such times. What a scene was that when, in the face of all the court and crown lawyers, the gifted, fearless Cavendish had stood up to speak the few words in testimony of Russell. With breathless attention were they heard, but heard in vain.

'I had the honour to be acquainted with my Lord Russell a long time. I always thought him a man of great honour, and too wary and prudent a man to be concerned in so desperate a design as this, and from which he could receive so little advantage.'

No wonder in such times that he retreated to Chatsworth, and more for want of occupation than from any great notion of improvement, pulled down the south side of his house, and rebuilt it with a front to the gardens; he made it not only the ornament of that beautiful and varied county, but the pride of England; and as such it has continued. Cibber, the sculptor and architect; Gibbons, who gave, as Horace Walpole says, 'to wood the loose and airy lightness of flowers, and chained together the various productions of the elements with a free disorder natural to each species,' left there the most beautiful efforts of their art.

In the dining-room of Chatsworth is a portrait, by Kneller, of him who

was distinguished as a wit, a scholar, a soldier, and a gentleman,—William, first Duke of Devonshire. His own political career was summed up in his own words, inscribed by his own desire, on his monument, in Latin: and thus rendered,—

• William, Duke of Devonshire,
Of good princes the faithful subject,
An enemy to and hated by tyrants.'

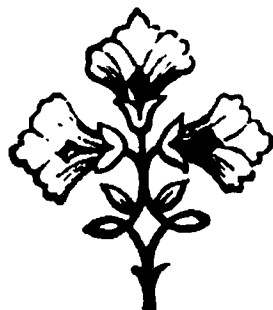
The mingled race of Russell and Cavendish owned, in the last century, another augmentation of honour and worth in the alliance with the Spencers. Faulty—perhaps frail—but with a heart naturally full of benevolence, the beautiful Duchess Georgiana came into the country of the Peak to enthrall all hearts. She appeared at a county ball at Derby, and brought wide mouths into fashion; for her laugh was so joyous, her teeth so perfect, that that defect in her face was converted into a beauty. She was the darling of those stalwart, but somewhat rough natures who vegetated in the vales through which the Derwent flows,—an uncompromising, honest tribe—those same squires and yeomen.

But there was one whom they loved better still, and who seemed to unite in his character all the kindest qualities of his race—the last duke. So princely, yet so humble; so lavish, yet so beneficent; such a model of a gentleman, yet valuing even the poorest individual for his sterling worth;—he will never be forgotten. In his day, Chatsworth, which had always been famed for its illustrious and gifted guests, was the very home of the Muses. All that was most famous clustered

round the fine mantelpiece in the dining-room, by the younger Westmacott—with that figure of Winter (is it not?) at one side. All that was graceful and beautiful was collected in that long gallery, one end of which is hung with sketches by the best masters. Yet, if a friend were sick, the duke would leave the great and gay assemblage, overpowered by emotion, and rush to the bedside even of a distant sufferer. So considerate, that he could not bear to see an old servant, an aged female, come out in the rain to open the gate into the park for him, but built a covered passage from his house to the road. Yet, in his own habits so simple, in his tastes so humble, that, in all the splendour of Chatsworth, he slept in a tent-bed—the resting-place of his boyhood; and when it was necessary to replenish it, and a new one, of the same structure, was sent down from Gillow's with furniture of white satin, he said it was too fine for him, and begged it might be put aside.

A volume might be filled with his kind acts—his gentle consideration for others. These are not qualities common to the great and prosperous; but they were in successive generations the great adornments of 'the Ca'ndish line,' as Hobbes has it in his 'Wonders of the Peak.' This is the character which Hobbes gives of his pupil, the second Earl of Devonshire, inappropriate to the late duke:—

• Of an illustrious line the noble heir,
Him Devon title gives, and Derby care;
Of judgment piercing, firm and constant mind,
Courteous to all, to those around him kind,
Free, not profuse, yet often he unbends.'



THE LITTLE HOP IN HARLEY STREET.

[F you take 'Johnson's Dictionary' and look out the word 'hop,' you will find it first described as a verb neuter [*hoppan*, Saxon; *hoppen*, Dutch], 'to jump, to skip lightly;' an act, by the way, which the great lexicographer himself (who carried as much *weight* in his time as his dictionary does in our own) rarely performed. Further on we find 'hop' as a noun substantive—

- '1. A jump, a light leap.
- '2. A jump on one leg.
- '3. A place where meaner people dance.'

With reference to this last definition I beg leave to say that the hop I am about to describe is of a very respectable character. The truth is that this word, in common with many others, has altered its signification since Johnson's time. The adjectives 'awful,' 'jolly,' 'stunning,' for instance, have a much wider meaning now than formerly. A certain order of slang has become fashionable of late; certain grammatical solecisms are not only tolerated but even affected in quarters where the purity of the 'Queen's English' might have been supposed to be held most dearly. I happened to sit in an opera-stall one evening immediately behind two ladies who move in that sphere of life commonly known as the *beau monde*, and whose names I have often read in the 'Morning Post.' I confess I was both surprised and amused at the freedom of their manners. One of them, who was *décolletée* to a marvellous extent, carried a glass in her eye with a most gentlemanlike air, and stared about the house with the greatest composure, passing comments on such of the audience whom she recognized in a pretty loud tone of voice, and occasionally varying her remarks by humming an air from the opera.

'I say, my dear,' said this elegant dame to her companion, 'seen Lady Jane to-night? There she is in the grand tier. Don't she look nice? Tra-lala-la, tralala-tralala, la-la, &c. By-the-way, where's Dick? (her husband, who had disappeared dur-

ing the whole of the third act). Oh! up there is he in Mrs. G——'s box? Didn't know he knew her. Tarala, tarala, tara-la, la-la. That's a pooty little air; Patti's last song I mean. Oh! I say, do look at Lady Jane, ain't she just lovely this evening? &c. &c.'

I merely mention these fragmentary remarks, which reached my ear by simple accident, to show that the language used by women of fashion is not always distinguished by the severity of its style. Indeed I do know ladies who have spoken of a successful scheme as a 'stunning plant,' and have even gone so far as to invite me to their houses for a 'family feed' and 'blow out.' Under these circumstances I do not see why I should object to use the word 'hop' in a more dignified sense than the author of 'Rasselas.' If anything could give it *ton* in polite circles it would be its association with Harley Street. That thoroughfare is one of the most respectable in this metropolis. Did you ever walk down its extreme length, from Regent's Park to Cavendish Square, and remark a single fact or feature in connection with it that was not consistent with the strictest propriety? Did you ever know a single soul who lived there and was not eminently respectable? Look down, I say, this long-drawn vista of dun-coloured brick and area railings and confess that there is dignity in its very dullness. The walls are unadorned with vulgar stucco, but are half as thick again as those of *Tyburnia*. The doorsteps are broad and ample, the iron-work about the entrances is of the Georgian era, the lamps above the door-heads are enclosed in roomy closets. There is an air of sound citizenship and quiet competence about the place which is undeniable. It does not boast such aristocratic denizens as *Mayfair*; it may not possess the wealth of *Belgravia*; but it represents a good old honest phase of London society *sans peur et sans reproche*. Duns seldom linger at those hospitable thresholds; the *demi-monde* is ba-

nished from its precincts. Members of the bar with rising practice, physicians who have already made a name, prosperous city men with capacious waistcoats, portly directors of old-established banks, and influential heads of flourishing concerns, would seem at a *coup d'œil* to be the principal householders of this favoured locality.

Among the few houses at which I have the honour to visit is that of Mrs. Higham Ferrers, who resides here with her lovely and accomplished daughters (two of whom may be seen on horseback in blue riding-habits cantering up the Row, attended by a trustworthy but plethoric menial, any morning in the season, weather permitting, between the hours of eleven and one). If you put it to me point-blank whether there is such a person as Mr. Higham Ferrars, I am bound to answer in the affirmative. I have seen him and shaken hands with him in his own house. Indeed he is always willing and happy to perform that ceremony with any of his wife's guests; but the fact is they are *her* guests, not his. She invites them, welcomes them, provides amusements for them, introduces them, wishes them good-night (or morning, as the case may be); and I mean to say that any lady who undertakes those onerous duties deserves all the credit which a hospitable hostess can claim. As for the mere fact of paying for these entertainments, of course Ferrars does *that*; but beyond this trivial consideration he can be scarcely said to have any concern in them at all. A bare suggestion to the contrary would fill him with uneasiness. We all have our separate pursuits and calling in this life. Some men are destined to occupy the Bench with credit, others are seen to more advantage on the rout-seats of society. Mr. Ferrars had followed the legal profession with success, and cannot be blamed if he feels ill at ease in a ball-room. So when I had jumped out of my cab at No. 999 in Harley Street, when I had entered the front door, which was flung open very wide before the last echo of my polysyllabic knock had died away; when the powdered

janitor, assisted by a page, had admitted me and handed me over to another retainer, who immediately relieved me of my coat and introduced me to a third, who inquired whether I would take any 'tea or coffee, sir?' and upon my declining those luxuries immediately intrusted me to a fourth, who walked before me with prodigious calves, and, after inquiring my name, communicated that important intelligence to another gentleman, of still greater gastrocnemial development, at the top of the stairs, who, not catching my real name, with that ready wit peculiar to his race, invented there and then and announced me by another forthwith; when, I say, I had passed through this awful ordeal and found myself at the drawing-room door, it was Mrs. Higham Ferrars herself who welcomed me at that portal, commented on the state of the weather, fanned herself, inquired after my relations, fanned herself again, and finally allowed me to pass on. It was Mrs. H. F. who repeated this ceremony to about a hundred and fifty guests for, I think, the third time that season. Why will people ask so many friends to their houses at once? Every one dislikes a crowd—torn dresses, rumpled coats, heat and flushed faces. Of what avail are Dr. Reid's theories on ventilation? What is the use of our reading about the unfortunate victims at Calcutta in 1756? We make Black Holes of our own drawing-rooms, coop up our victims in a vitiated atmosphere for some three hours together, or send them out to sit on the stairs, where they encounter the first of those three draughts mentioned in the famous catarrhal enigma, and may congratulate themselves if they get rid of their colds by employing the other two. It is all very well for Cornet Dimpler, ensconced with Miss Petworth in the inmost recesses of the conservatory. I have no doubt that half an hour (in fact I may as well say it was thirty-five minutes by my watch) could be spent very pleasantly there in such company, especially when a large and thickly-foliated laurestina shrub conceals—; but there—I am not going to talk

of what does not concern me. All I mean is that we are not all of us so fortunate on these occasions, and to sit down on the remains of a huge strawberry-cream ice, left by some indiscreet charmer three steps up from the drawing-room landing, is not the most pleasant thing in the world for a young man who pays his tailor's bills with punctuality.

But I am anticipating. When I entered the *salon* devoted to the mazy dance (rendered doubly mazy by the number of guests who were participating in that amusement), I did what I believe most gentlemen do under the same circumstances, I stood as flat up against the wall as I possibly could, and tried to look very indifferent to everything that was going on. That I believe is the correct deportment to assume in the society of strangers, and as none of my acquaintance happened to be near me at the moment, I have no doubt that it succeeded remarkably well. It certainly did in the case of the Hon. Wotton Bassett (of the Foreign Office), who was acting in precisely the same way at the opposite end of the room. But then Bassett has an eye-glass, and that is a tremendous advantage to any man. The more I see of eye-glasses the more convinced I am of the extraordinary service which they render in the cause of swelldom. You can do anything with them, and what is of much more importance, you can *not* do anything with them. They give a man a social status and an air of nonchalance which you cannot affect if you depend on your natural eyesight. The best feature in their use is that they cannot be adopted by everybody. No one, socially speaking, *wants* an eye-glass till he is of age; and it would require some effrontery to start one then and endure the chaff of one's friends, who know very well that in your early youth you required no such assistance. Besides, a concave lens would be absolutely blinding; and though they *do* say that plain glasses suitable to any sight are sold, fancy the fearful ignominy you would endure if the ruse were discovered. I say, therefore, that near-sighted men are to be envied on this score, and possess

the additional advantage of being able to cut those acquaintances which they do not wish to keep up, without the slightest odium. Thus, on being reminded that he had passed his old schoolfellow (Mr. Cadworthy) the other day in Pall Mall without a recognition (Mr. C., you must know, frequently omits the eighth letter of the alphabet, and dresses, it must be confessed, outrageously), Wotton Bassett smiles affably and says, 'Did I now? 'pon word—vewy sowwy—but what's a fellah to do you see? I'm as blind as a beetle!'

The Honourable W. B. has only just looked in for half an hour after dining with some fellahs at the Carlton, and on his road to Lady Crusingham's drum. So we shall see very little of him to-night, but that very little, to adopt a familiar phrase, is generally considered to go a long way.

Just as I have mentally arrived at this conclusion, up trips Miss Higham Ferrars, dressed magnificently in white silk and *coiffée à ravir* (if that is not the correct expression, I beg the ladies will excuse it, but ignorant as I am of French, I know that of course our own language can never adequately describe the beauties of their toilette), up trips Miss Higham Ferrars, I say, and with many courteous smiles and greetings, begs to inquire whether I have a partner for the next dance (Lancers). I reply in the negative, and seize the opportunity to express a hope that she will give me the pleasure, &c. She shakes her head in a very bewitching manner, and pointing to a long list of names upon her tablet, leads me forthwith to an angel in white muslin, Miss ——. Isn't it a wonderful fact in connection with ball-room introductions, that the most important word in the formula employed, viz., the name of the 'parties' introduced, should be heard the least distinctly? To this moment I have not the wildest notion who my first partner was. I only danced with her once, and finding that she did not make herself particularly agreeable, I did not care to repeat the experiment; but her name I

never ascertained. Of course every one has his own theories about the nature of introductions—about what is proper to say and not to say on these occasions. Captain Rattler, for instance, plunges at once in *medias res*.

'Pleashaw — next polkaw — engaged? deaw me! distressed beyond meashaw; next valse, then—thank you. Warm weathaw, isn't it? Been lately to the operaw?' and so on, becoming in less than five minutes on as good terms with his partner as he always is with himself, and joining her in a conversation of the most intensely imbecile nature concerning nothing at all.

Young Shyley, on the contrary, who has not been long in town, who was brought up at a proprietary college, and has not acquired the *savoir faire* which our public schools and universities are said to impart to British youth—Young Shyley, as you must perceive, goes through the ceremony very much in the same manner as if he were paying a visit to his dentist's. There sits Miss Coldbrook, the object of his silent admiration, half the evening. He is dying to be presented. At length the happy moment arrives. The mediating angel steps between them—pulls down the awful barrier which decorum and Mrs. Grundy have hitherto interposed. 'Miss Coldbrook, allow me, &c. &c. to Mr. Shyley.' Mr. Shyley bows—Miss Coldbrook bows. So far so good, but—*après!* what is to be done next? Who is to speak first, and on what subject? You see there is the whole world before them, and neither knows what the other's opinion may be on any mortal subject. It is, we must confess, an awkward predicament for both. The unhappy youth gives a diffident little cough, gets very pink, and pretends to concentrate all his energies in buttoning his glove. The lady, who evidently expects him to say something, also looks somewhat confused, and begins to play with her fan. At last Mr. Shyley, who wants to waltz, but is afraid she will only dance quadrilles, begins—

'I don't know whether——'

Miss C. (*who only hearing the last word, naturally imagines that he is referring to the state of the barometer, sicut est mos*). 'No, I think, rather hot.'

Mr. S. (*who, distracted by the buzz of conversation all round, mistakes the nature of her reply*). 'I'm sorry for that.'

Miss C. (*stiffly*). 'I beg your pardon?'

Mr. S. 'I say I'm sorry you won't dance.'

Miss C. (*Still more stiffly*). 'I was not aware that you asked me.'

Mr. S. 'I beg your pardon, I was going to do so, but I—I thought you said you would rather not.'

Miss C. (*who begins to look on him as a lunatic*). 'Oh no. I merely observed that——'

Mr. S. 'Then perhaps I may v-venture to hope—that is to ask whether I—I mean, will you favour me with the next galop?'

Miss C. (*Wishing to avoid such a partner*). 'Thank you; I'm engaged.'

Mr. S. 'Oh!' (*Not knowing exactly what to say next, bows and exit*).

Miss C. (*Sotto voce*). 'Stupid fellow!'

Now whose fault was this little misunderstanding? Shyley is a capital fellow, with plenty of conversation, when you draw him out. He has more *vous* at five-and-twenty than Captain Rattler will acquire all his life—but the youthful civilian is nervous, diffident of his abilities, fancies whatever he says is going to be criticised. There may be, too, a touch of pardonable vanity in his composition. He won't condescend to the commonplace emptiness of small talk. He won't chatter about nothings. He won't affect the haw haw conventionalities of life. Moreover, he is sensitive to a fault; draws back his moral antennæ at a brusque answer; and to adopt a familiar metaphor, is so afraid of putting his foot in it that he will not step forward at all. Our military friend, on the other hand, with half the brains, has twice the confidence of poor Shyley. He has no fear of making a *faux pas*, but marches on gallantly as becomes his pro-

session. No need to taunt *him* with 'fye! a soldier and afeard.' He would talk to Lady Macbeth herself with the greatest composure, and on any subject. Politics, art, literature, science, broach what topic you will, he will enter on it as familiarly as possible. Of course he makes mistakes now and then, as, for instance, when Miss Blewstock asked him how he liked the 'Stones of Venice,' on which occasion I heard him say that he couldn't get further than the first volume, as he found novel-reading such a *baw*; and he is reported to have called Sir Isaac Newton a great metaphysician; but these, I admit, are exceptional cases, and as a rule, I must confess that his conversation, though not over brilliant, is well sustained.

Miss Coldbrook is one of those young ladies who looks upon reticence as a mark of gentility. The guiding principle of her life appears to be not only *nihil admirari*, but *nihil dicere* too. Her education having been unfortunately restricted to the attainment of certain accomplishments, she wisely limits her remarks to monosyllables, but manages to make them signify a great deal. Her 'Yes?' is always interrogative, encouraging you to further observations. Her 'No!' rather indicates surprise, and may betoken either the extreme freshness of her virgin mind, or a hidden vein of satire which she is too lady-like to reveal. She is generally spoken of as a 'superior person,' and so she may be for what I know, but unluckily I have never been able to discover it. Will any of my readers oblige me by defining a superior person? Superior to what? or to whom? Need their comparative Excellencies be necessarily disagreeable? (most of the superior people I have met have been excessively so.) Again, who are the inferior individuals, and what becomes of the other degrees of comparison?

Turn back to your Latin grammar—'*Superus*, superior, *summus*, *inferus*, inferior, *infimus*.' You see even the superior people are not quite at the top of the tree; there is another rank above them. As

for the poor *infamous*—faugh! why am I joking? Comparisons are odious things, and this, by-the-way, is the very appellation applied by Miss Coldbrook to ladies who are unfortunate enough to offend her.

A piano, a French horn, a flute, and violin, formed the modest but efficient orchestra of our entertainment. The order of the evening was as follows:—quadrille, valse, polka, galop, quadrille, valse, redowa, lancers, &c., *da capo*, except the polka, which found so few supporters at first that it was not repeated. To say the truth, it is not a pleasant dance, and how it ever could have come into vogue is a marvel. Does any young gentleman call to mind its first appearance in this country? (of course it is beyond the ladies' recollection) the elaborate pirouetting, hand in hand, *vis à vis*, *dos à dos*, toe-and-heel business which characterised its original performance? Any couple who should now go through those elaborate figures would be put down as reciprocally insane. The dance of St. Vitus itself would hardly be looked upon with more horror. Even reduced to its simplest elements of two slides and a hop, it is open to objection. Why hop at all, in the strictest sense of the word? Dancing should be an easy gliding motion or a downright spring from the ground (which of course would never be tolerated in decent society). But this capering on one leg is detestable. When *Mdlle. Coryphée* comes down to the footlights, and supported by *M. Glisseur*, balances herself on one toe and points the other at right angles to the grand tier, the venerable gentlemen in the stage box may applaud, but I can hiss with equal gusto from the pit. Wonderful? yes; difficult? yes; but graceful? no, no, NO! It is a monstrous absurdity—a gross imposition to call this ballet-dancing. It is not dancing; it is cruel posturing, scarcely less ugly than those which fanatical fakeers, or dervishes, or ministers of Juggernaut perform. They say the poor girl's feet are horribly deformed in consequence—clubbed together at the toes from this un-

natural exertion. Down with the monstrosity! let the *figurantes* at least stand well on the stage if they can take no other position in society.

Such was the drift of my remarks to Mrs. Trippingham, with whom I had the pleasure of walking through the third quadrille. After all, there is nothing like *square* dances. Instead of madly reeling round the room, hot and breathless, giddy as to the head, and limp as to the shirt collar, you may enjoy a little quiet conversation in a quadrille, and yet experience that sort of undefinable pleasure which one derives from seeing graceful women move in time to music. There is one particular figure in the Lancers—goodness knows what they call it—where four nymphs approach to a common centre, stand still for an instant, and then droop into a long, low, and stately curtsy, their flounces and finery mingling into a sort of gauzy maelstrom all round. How they do it I don't know, but this obeisance is, to my mind, always a most charming spectacle.

'That is because it looks like an act of humility,' cries Mrs. T., who can be very severe when she pleases. 'Of course it is good fun for you men to stand up as the lords of creation, and see us crouching before you—that's what you all like—as I was saying to Ned the other day, he always——'

Here the little lady stopped, confused. I never heard the rest of that connubial secret. Perhaps I may guess its import. Did she mean that her worthy and excellent husband liked to have his own way? Quite right, Mr. T., that is the plan I mean to adopt when I enter the married state. And you, my fair and amiable partner, find that your happiness is best secured by yielding to him. Was this what you meant to say with reference to that low curtsy? Ah! Mrs. T., you are not the first woman who has stooped to conquer!

Did any one ever get through the Lancers without a mistake? Has mortal man ever been able to master the mysteries of that intricate ceremonial? What a profound com-

plexity of evolutions it presents to the uninitiated! First one has to charge forward and then retreat through dense masses of crinoline: then every man is suddenly called upon to *set* to his neighbour's partner—i. e. dodge about right and left as people do who encounter each other in the street and vainly endeavour to proceed in opposite directions. Then the preposterous rite of 'visiting' is performed, which means that we are to bow to two couples and to charge against a third. But a still more awful ordeal ensues when I voluntarily isolate myself, and in the presence of seven (male and female) companions of our 'set' assert my dignity as *cavalier seul*. Perhaps this may altogether be considered as the most trying position in which a 'dancing man' can find himself. What is the proper thing to be done under the circumstances? They say there is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous; but in this case the more steps you take, the more ridiculous you become. The worst of it is that one somehow instinctively grows serious under the trial. I don't know anything, short of a funeral, which is more depressing.

You never saw a man smile who was executing this figure; he is sure to be a prey to the intensest melancholy; he pulls down his waistcoat, he examines his sleeve-links, he plays with his watch-chain, or stretches out his arms like pump-handles, or hopelessly shrugs his shoulders. He may try to look at ease, but he is not: he may try to appear indifferent, but he is not; he is going through a solemn duty, and deserves our respect for his heroism.

There is an old story of an Oriental magnate, who, on seeing an English ball for the first time, expressed his surprise to find ladies and gentlemen dancing to amuse themselves. 'In our country,' he added, 'we get all this sort of thing *done for us*.' To my mind that was a sign of national degeneracy, but since the world began, the world has danced, or looked on at dancing with delight. The Greeks capered before their battles; the Romans at their feasts;

the Egyptians danced religiously—and profanely, too, sometimes. I remember an old fresco representing Herodias engaged in that amusement. The young lady was performing a summersault, while her relations looked on approvingly. No doubt it was the most fashionable *pas* of the day, which her mother had insisted she should acquire. It is more than three thousand years ago since the good people of Crete began jigging to their cymbals. They first taught humanity to dance *in time*. The Pyrrhic measure, by-the-way, was dissyllabic, and thus produced the earliest form of *deux-temps*. Since those early days, how many steps have been practised, how many new figures introduced, from the wild Corybantic of Phrygia to the stately English minuet—from the Proseleusmatic (or challenging) foot down to the heel-and-toe business of modern polkas!

The influence of song upon the human heart has long been a favourite theme with poets, but who can say how many young people have danced into each other's affections? History informs us that William the Conqueror's mamma first fascinated the Duke of Normandy by skipping on a village-green. Owen Tudor gained Queen Catherine's love by stumbling in a dance and falling head foremost into her Majesty's lap (fancy such a catastrophe happening in Mayfair!). Have you ever read the epistles of Aristænetus? I confess that I have not myself, but I am given to understand that that celebrated author makes one of his heroes (Spensippus) go raving mad about a young lady who excelled in this accomplishment. Even Ariadne could not sit still while Mr. Dionysius was executing a *pas seul*, but must needs jump up and be his partner. To this day, a man who enjoys a reputation for waltzing has it all his own way with the fair sex in a ball-room, and can cut out many a youth with twice as good manners or moustaches.

I think a capital essay might be written on the Terpsichorean art, tracing its history from its earliest development down to modern times, and comparing the fashions of an

English hop with those of Continental life. I would devote a special chapter to the Quartier Latin, and endeavour to describe the wonderful contortions which M. Jules, the Parisian student, exhibits at Mabilly, or Château Rouge, when he capers through the 'cancan,' like an inebriated frog. I would descant upon the graceful action of Perea Nena; give the history of the Cachuca and Cracovienne, and show you how infinitely superior the Spanish ballet is to ours. I would tell you all I could about the Highland fling, the reel of Tulloch, the rustic 'double shuffle,' and the sailors' hornpipe. I might transport you to the Roman Campagna, where native Contadini trip through the Tarantella at sunset, to the sound of Pifferari pipes. With some ceremony, too, I could introduce you to a German gesellschafft, where everything is done by strictest rule, the least violation of which might result in your expulsion from the ball-room. So many couple stand up in turn; so many abide their time in a decorous and long-patient *queue*. Do you know the nature of a cotillon? are you acquainted with the mysterious obligations of a *frei-tour*? Woe to the wretched Engländer who does not recognize that ancient and long-respected licence! You may be dancing with the prettiest girl in the room, the most agreeable, the most accomplished—nay, let us say at once, the very lady of your choice. You have been half-a-dozen times round the room and stop exhausted. No matter: just at this juncture, a native gentleman comes up, casts a respectful glance of admiration on your partner, clicks his heels together, gives a smart bow, and before you can say Jack Robinson, is twirling her round the room. You may object to the man; the lady may be tired; but you cannot refuse: it is a custom in Vaterland, and you must submit. True, it is only for *one* turn; but the same thing may happen again and again with different cavaliers, and your only remedy is not to dance the cotillon. The rules and regulations of a German 'hop' are inviolable,

and any infringement of them may involve you in a quarrel—perhaps an ‘affair of honour.’

Time was when our own code of ball-room etiquette was observed with equal punctilio. There are old gentlemen among us who remember when the master of the ceremonies at Bath, Cheltenham, or Leamington was a very great personage indeed, from whose decision as to what was and what was not good manners there was no appeal. This office still lingers in some of our old-fashioned watering-places, where it is held by ancient half-pay captains and decayed gentlemen of the Georgian era. They receive a call and a guinea from you with the utmost politeness and condescension, and you may get as many introductions as you please in return for your little honorarium. Heaven forbid that we should revive that exploded era of foggism, but I think there should be some little tacit understanding between hostess and guests—between the presenter and the presented on those occasions. I am not unreasonable: I know that from time immemorial in a ball-room every gentleman, whether eligible or not, has expressed a wish to dance with the prettiest and most agreeable young ladies. I am aware, on the other hand, that certain ladies, whatever may be their age, complexion, or pecuniary prospects, do sometimes desire to monopolize all the handsomest and most desirable young men. I feel—without referring to Mr. Babbage, or even working it out by rule of three—that these conditions together present an arithmetical difficulty—those of the superlative degree of excellence, in both sexes, being generally in the minority. For my own part, I confess I possess no extraordinary qualifications myself, and consequently do not aspire to the belles of the room. I put up cheerfully with the pla—I mean with the less beautiful ones. I attach myself early in the evening to the older ladies—mamas, aunts, &c., who came as chaperons (you may even ask them to dance with tolerable safety—of course they won’t accept, but it leaves a good impres-

sion). By this means I ingratiate myself with them, and by-and-by, when, as Captain Rattler says, the ‘steam is up,’ and people are beginning to unbend—I feel that I have done my duty, and am free to enjoy myself. But though I have not the slightest objection to become generally useful, I must and will protest against being victimized with a partner who can’t dance. There are some women who *will* stand up to waltz without the remotest notion of the step, without the faintest ear for time.

There is Miss Frumpleigh, for instance, who is exactly half a-head taller than myself, sitting alone in her glory on the sofa. She is rather deaf and stupid—I don’t mind that. I would have *talked* to her with cheerfulness; but just at this moment up comes our indefatigable hostess.

‘Dear me, Mr. Easel, why aren’t you dancing? Haven’t a partner? Oh! I’ll soon remove *that* difficulty. Do you know Miss Frumpleigh? (*aside*) most talented person—wrote the “Recollections of a Laundress,” and heaps of other things—Miss Frumpleigh, allow me, &c., &c., &c.’

And thus, in the most cruel manner, and without the slightest warning, I was let in for asking Miss F—— to stand up in the next quadrille. Even then there was a chance: she *might* have refused; but no, I was evidently a doomed man: she rose with an expression of triumph. The music struck up: but, lo! instead of a quadrille—it *was* a waltz. Now, thought I, is my only chance of escape.

‘I believe Miss Frumpleigh only dances quadrilles?’ I said, smiling in my most affable manner. ‘O dear no,’ said that lady in reply; ‘quite a mistake; I dance everything—polka, gallop, schottische, cellair-yus, redowa, varsovienne, and all the rest of ’em. What is this? a waltz? I shall be delighted! I am so passionately fond of dancing. Come along.’

Here was a situation! To stand up with a person who is taller than oneself is awkward at any time; but to place one’s arm round the waist of a female stranger, whose age nearly

doubles one's own—who is insensible to the laws of rhythm, and proportionably stiff about the joints, amounts to martyrdom. We began—and how shall I describe what ensued? I remember playing, as a boy, with a large, strong, Newfoundland dog of ours, which I used to raise up by his fore-feet and try to make it walk arm-in-arm with me. The staggering, *backward* gait of the animal under these circumstances is the nearest parallel I can draw to Miss Frumpleigh's action in the waltz. She clutched me stoutly by the shoulder, dragging me after her rather than following me. She gasped, she stared, she endeavoured to mark the time corporeally with horrible emphasis, and signally failed, so that we kept bobbing up and down alternately, like the opposite pistons of a steam-engine. Everybody was looking; I felt conscious of becoming very red.

'We—we don't seem to be getting on, I'm afraid,' said I, at length.

'Don't you think so?' replied Miss Frumpleigh. 'Well, p'raps you're a little out of practice. You must keep step, you know. There! so: and so' (*more piston action*).

'May I inquire what step you prefer?' said I.

'What step? why the *doo tong* of course,' said Miss Frumpleigh, bobbing about; 'don't you know it? It's *one, two, one, two; one two*; like this; don't you see? dear me, I thought every one knew the *doo tong*, it's so very easy, and much prettier than the old waltz.'

Just at this moment I was again so forcibly reminded of the Newfoundland dog that I was determined not to go on any longer.

'I hope you don't find this making you giddy?' I asked, hoping she would offer to sit down.

'Oh, dear, not at all!' cried Miss Frumpleigh, and goodness knows how long she would have continued; but just at that moment, Major Heavitalé, who was dancing with Miss Bouncer, came bump upon her, and I seized the opportunity to replace her on the sofa.

'Dear me! how clumsy *some* people are!' said Miss F., looking daggers at the Major.

'Dreadfully so! I hope you are not hurt?' I asked, with perfect sincerity, though, if the truth must be told, I was not so angry with our military friend as I might have been under other circumstances. I offered to borrow some smelling-salts, but Miss F., taking a good sniff at her vinaigrette, declared that she would rather have an ice, which I hastened to procure at once. The consumption of that delicacy (a *mélange* of vanilla and strawberry cream) seemed to console her a little, and I am happy to add, caused such a delay, that the music ceased before we could stand up again, and thus released me from any further embarrassment.

I earnestly recommend this little episode in the history of our 'hop' to the attention of any future compiler of ball-room etiquette. Can nothing be done to prevent the possibility of such a temporary *mésalliance* as that which I have just described? I wish to put it fairly on both sides. Miss Frumpleigh evidently felt herself aggrieved by what, no doubt, she considered my awkwardness. On the other hand, her partner would certainly have preferred not waltzing at all to waltzing with Miss F. Perhaps it would be as well if, before the ceremony of introduction takes place, presenter could just mention to presentee the age, height, approximate weight, and dancing capabilities of co-presentee on each side. Nymphs and swains could then make their own election, and harmony would prevail all round.

Amid the galaxy of beauty which glowed that night, it seems invidious to point out any one 'bright particular star,' but as journalists from time immemorial have devoted a paragraph to the latest *débutante*, so any damsel who makes her first curtsy on the domestic stage of drawing-room life may naturally expect to be noticed in 'London Society.' Miss Amy Blandford, youngest daughter of Mrs. Blandford (of Castle Blandford), had just come out, as the phrase goes, though where and when that mysterious ceremony of egression takes place, I never could clearly understand.

I know several young ladies who have long left the nursery, who attend réunions, drums, and tea-fights, whose skirts sweep the ground after the fashion of their elders, whose hair is gathered up into the knot of adult life, and who yet, singularly enough, are not supposed to be 'out.' At length a time arrives when, apparently by common consent, that dignity is attained. Mamma comes down one morning and declares that her darling has finally abandoned pinafores. The rosebud is in full leaf (alas that it should ever cease to bloom!), and Mademoiselle is presented to an admiring public.

Miss Amy is about the middle height, a blonde, whose ample yellow hair needs no artificial means to make it ripple round her head, with rosy cheeks and large, grey, laughing eyes. As for her lips—but let them speak for themselves; I am not going to play interpreter. Does any one ever read descriptions of female beauty—of rural landscape? To me they always sound the feeblest conventionalities. Painters may set them down on canvas and imitate their refinement with a thousand subtle tints of colour, but what can one do with pen and ink? The English vocabulary is not full enough; no language is sufficiently fertile in expression for such details. Take any single feature in the face, and see how hopeless the task is. Among thousands of women whom you have met—of hundreds whom you know—did you ever see two with the same facial line? We may talk of aquiline noses (a horrible comparison, by-the-way), classic noses, the *nez retroussé*, and—nothing further. There our nomenclature ends. It is the same with other features. The Shakespearian lover who sat down to celebrate his mistress's eyebrows would be hard up now for epithets and synonyms. He might say that they were 'delicately pencilled' or compare them to an 'arch' thrown over the 'fish-pools of Heshbon' (which would include another compliment), but we should cry out that we had all heard this sort of thing before, and wanted something new.

We weary of these hacknied phrases and empty similes. Old Homer himself is tiresome when he sings of *βοῶπις πόρνια Ἥρη* twice over in the same page. So I shall content myself with saying that Miss Amy Blandford is a very pretty girl, with whom everybody is anxious to dance. Her elder sister, Miss B., is also very charming, but having been 'out' two or three seasons, you conceive, does not excite the same admiration. It is the old story; the latest belle receives the earliest homage. Queen Amy's reign begins to-night; her majesty is a little fluttered by the loyalty of her devoted servants, but bears her exaltation with becoming dignity. Her sway may be acknowledged in many drawing-rooms possibly for years to come, but by-and-by another princess will arise, and the sceptre and the sovereignty change hands. There are some old whiskered subjects among us who remember dynasties long passed away, before the present royal line of fashion was in existence. Can you imagine a female monarch without crinoline? The mind recoils from the contemplation of any robe of office which only contained a half-dozen yards of silk. Yet illustrious ladies lived, ruled, and were vastly popular in such costume. There are men who would have kneeled to kiss the hem of those scanty skirts. Is it not amusing to watch the rotation of public taste? Women of *monde* looked back at the hoops of their grandmothers and laughed. Does it ever occur to you, my dear girls, that by-and-by your *jupons* will become a like subject for ridicule? Yes, depend on it, as Father Time jogs on, he will trundle those spherical obstructions out of the path of humanity, far away into oblivion, and the face of this earth shall know them no more.

'Oh, how can you go on so, you dreadful creature?' cries Miss Chatterton; 'I can't think what makes you men so prejudiced against crinoline; I'm sure, I hope it will never go out of fashion. It's so cool in summer, and——'

'And so warm in winter, I suppose?' said I.

'Exactly so!' continued that lady, 'that's just what I was going to say; and then, you know, it looks so nice and——'

'Of that fact,' I remonstrate, 'we are not in a position to judge, except from seeing it in shop windows, where, I must confess——'

'What nonsense!' retorts Miss C., with a little blush. 'You know perfectly well what I mean. Of course, I don't say there's any beauty in the—the thing itself, but it sets off a dress, and that is what we want. Would you have women go about like maypoles?'

'You wouldn't be nearly so much like a maypole then as you are like a diving-bell now,' I respond. 'Did you ever see the *Venus* of Milo?'

'I don't think so; and if she is not dressed more decently than most Venuses, I would rather not,' answered Miss Chatterton, pretty sharply. 'Pray do you know that this is our galop, and that I am waiting for you to begin?'

Once more I whirl over the glazed calico at an awful rate with the indefatigable Miss Chatterton. To give that lady her due, she dances *à merveille*, and so lightly, that I find no difficulty in steering her (if I may use a nautical expression) through a crowd of people who were indulging in the same amusement. Why will so many couples start at the same moment? Why will some of them gyrate in the wrong direction? Under these trying circumstances, it requires a quick eye and steady guiding arm to prevent collisions. Fancy four coming crash up against each other in the hottest of the dance. Such a casualty is by no means impossible, to say nothing of the chance one runs of breaking an arm against the folding-doors which you encounter in a transit from room to room. All these dangers Miss Chatterton braves with the utmost—I won't say coolness, the state of the atmosphere would have prevented that—but courage, and the dance concluded, we go down to supper.

There is a dismal metaphor in common use about a wedding-breakfast, a city feast, or ball supper,

when conducted on a liberal scale. It is the fashion to say on these occasions that the table groaned with delicacies. Why groaned? I can only say if such a phenomenon really happened, I should feel particularly uncomfortable. Besides, it has no right to do so. If any one is likely to groan, it would be perhaps some one who had helped himself too freely to champagne or lobster salad, and then only the morning after. A generous table could never groan as long as it had a leg to stand on. It might give a little creak of satisfaction in a quiet way at seeing so many happy faces round it. But to accuse it of groaning is a base calumny.

When I offered my services to Miss Chatterton, she began by saying that she thought she would 'try a prawn.' Having learnt by experience that young ladies are in the habit of underrating their appetites on these occasions, I ventured to bring her some chicken and a slice of tongue by mistake, and am happy to add that she not only approved of the substitute, but subsequently condoned the blunder by partaking of some *mayonnaise* and iced pudding. I also procured a bottle of Moselle and filled her glass once (perhaps, *entre nous*, I may say twice) with that pleasant restorative. Singularly enough, as I looked down the table, through a long and cheerful vista of flowers and fruit, silver *épergne* and glittering glass, I observed several youths following my example, and it is astonishing what an effect this simple expedient had upon the spirits of the company.

It was during this portion of the entertainment that Mr. Higham Ferrars appeared to the greatest advantage. If his wife held undisputed rule in the ball-room, he may be said to have been the presiding genius of the supper-table. Not content with paying attention to Mrs. de Gobbleton, the partner whom he had selected to bring down stairs, he insisted upon pressing all sorts of nameless dishes upon every one present, exhorting the male portion of his guests, individually, to take care of the ladies, and pledging all the available company in cham-

pagne, in spite of sundry coughs and frowns from Mrs. Ferrars, who doubtless looked upon the practice of taking wine with one's friends as a custom no longer recognized by the civilized world.

'Nemo saltat sobrius,' says Tully, and though I would not for worlds endorse such an atrocious sentiment in the nineteenth century, yet I must admit that the dancing went on with palpably increased spirit after supper. There are some little misses, I believe, who would never tire of this amusement, but would go on waltzing until breakfast-time if they were permitted. The bloom on their young cheeks does not vanish with the early dawn. It is only mammas who shun the peep of day, *en grande toilette*. About half-past two A.M. there is great confusion in Harley Street. Ever so many carriages stop the way. Lady Rowzer's brougham, Mrs. Flamborough Grandling's char'yot, Sir Hedward Unter's keb—the wretched linkman is quite hoarse with bawling out their names. He keeps his lantern burning, and though every one can see quite plainly without it, insists on guiding every one to their carriage, all along the perilous road, comprised in some ten feet of carpet. 'This way, my lady; take care, please; three steps down, yer ladyship—

where to, my lady?' and so on, at sixpence per head. I perform a similar service for Miss Blandford without demanding any pecuniary reward. I only ask to be 'remembered' in another way. Then seizing my gibus and resisting Mr. Lankman's importunities to 'ave a cab, capting,' I stroll off on foot.

What is that ruddy gleam which, shining from across the City through the early smokeless air, lights up and flashes on the windows of deserted Oxford Street? It is the radiance of Aurora, goddess of the morning. *Her* chariot does not stop the way; her snow-white steeds speed gently on, directed by those rosy fingers. As she drives up, the eastern gates of heaven fly open. She scatters glittering dew upon the earth, while her long white veil floats back upon the breeze. See, Nox and Somnus flee before her: the constellations disappear at her approach.

Hail, gentle Eos, daughter of Hyperion, hail! Let me hasten to propitiate thee with incense, from a fragrant herb—very precious—brought in tall ships from across the loud-sounding sea—prepared by dusky maidens in a far-off land—the fertile country of Havannah!

JACK EASEL

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TRAVELLING IN THE AIR.

'Ille robur et æs triplex
Circæ pectus erat, qui fragilem tract
Commisit pelago ratem
Primus.' *Hæc. Od. iii. lib. 1.*

'Or oak, or brass with triple fold,
Around that mortal's bosom rolled
Who first to the wild ocean's rage
Launched the frail bark.'—*Francis.*

ORACE was the timidiest of sailors, and dedicated an ode to the ship in which his friend Virgil was about to venture upon a voyage which nowadays forms part of a gentleman's summer tour. But if he thought oak and triple brass necessary to the breast of the first sailor, how does his horror rise, in the Ode from which we have quoted, at the daring of the 'expert Dædalus' who first ventured to tempt the void of air *pennis non homini datis*, with wings not to mortals given! Many mythical and mythological stories of flying are told from the olden times. That of Dædalus and Icarus, though it probably had its truth in adventures on another element, has yet sufficient of interest to entitle it to mention.

Dædalus is reported to have been a most ingenious mechanic, and also the inventor of sails for ships. The romantic tradition concerning him is as follows:—Having committed a great

crime he fled from Athens to Crete, taking with him his son Icarus. He there constructed for Minos, king of that island, the famous labyrinth with which every one is familiar; but having incurred the king's displeasure, he was himself confined therein. In order to effect his escape, he made wings of feathers and wax, for himself and his son, and with these attempted to fly away; but Icarus soared so high that the sun melted the wax by which his wings were fastened, and he fell into that part of the sea which, by way of testimony, bore his name for hundreds of years afterwards. Dædalus, however, more careful, arrived safely in Sicily.

There is generally some germ of truth as the origin of the most absurd mythological story. Most likely Dædalus and Icarus escaped in a boat,

and the latter fell overboard, which solution, the report that Dædalus invented sails would seem to favour. Uncivilized minds are prone to class things unfamiliar to them with those they know about. Thus the South Sea Islanders conceived the ships of the first discoverers to be gigantic birds; and the late Christopher North, in his fine poem of the 'Isle of Palms,' describing the surprise of a child at the first sight of a ship, makes her say—

‘A cloud has fallen from the sky
And is sailing on the sea!’

It is said that Archytas, a clever geometer of Greece, who was lost in a storm on the coast of Calabria, fashioned a dove which made its way through the air for a considerable distance. In more modern times, Müller of Königsberg, thence called Regiomontanus, is recorded to have made a dove on similar principles, which extended its wings, and flew before the Emperor Charles V. when he made a public entry into Nuremberg. This story is very pretty and circumstantial, and only fails in one point—namely, that Regiomontanus died sixty years before Charles made his visit to Nuremberg.

Roger Bacon is the first English philosopher who asserts the existence of a machine for flying; but how much value should be attached to it may be judged from his own words. He says ‘not that he himself had seen it, or was acquainted with any person who had done so, but he knew an ingenious person who had contrived one.’

Though men of the highest genius had turned their speculations to the subject of flying, they did not succeed in finding out the means of doing it. After a time a lower class of men, with some smattering of knowledge and much conceit, but little of real ability, appeared on the stage as pretenders to the art of flying. In the sixteenth century a person of this kind visited Scotland, James IV. being at that time king. He introduced himself as a professor of alchemy, and made friends with the needy king by promising to find out for him the philosopher's stone.

This charlatan was appointed by royal favour to an abbacy: but having failed in his promise of producing wealth, he saw the necessity of some new excitement, and therefore made a pair of large wings, with which he undertook to fly from the walls of Stirling Castle. As he had probably played his game out, and become desperate, he actually put his foolhardy scheme into practice; but those of our readers who know the situation of Stirling Castle will not be surprised to hear that he broke his thigh in his consequent fall to the ground. The quibbling and sophistical logic of the age, aided by his own cool impudence, sufficed to excuse him from the contempt he deserved. ‘My wings,’ said he, ‘were composed of various feathers, among them were those of dunghill fowls, and they, by a certain sympathy, were attracted to the dunghill; whereas had my wings been made of the feathers of eagles, the same sympathy would have attracted them to the regions of air.’

There were, during the two succeeding centuries, many attempts to fly; all of them, of course, ending in failure, and many terminating tragically. In 1617, Fleider, rector of the school at Tübingen, lectured on the art of flying, but he wisely refrained from attempting to put his theories into practice: however, an unhappy monk tried to do so, but fell down, and, breaking both his legs, perished a miserable victim to a stupid experiment.

About 1680 it was demonstrated by Borelli, by means of numerous comparative experiments on the pectoral muscles of men and birds, that it is absolutely impossible to find adequate force in the human muscles to perform the act of flying, even if wings could be attached. Before this, however, men of genius had, in retirement, evidently hit upon the principles of the balloon, although it was to be so many centuries before the idea should be perfected. Albert, of Saxony, although his assumptions are erroneous and fanciful, yet foreshadowed the principles of the modern balloon. He assumes that essential fire (what-

ever that may be) is lighter than air, and floats above the region of our atmosphere; and so conceived the idea of enclosing a portion of this ethereal substance in a light hollow globe, which he imagined might be raised in this manner to a certain height, and there kept floating, while, by an infusion of the grosser fluid, it could be made to descend at pleasure.

How anxiously would Albert speculate upon the means of procuring this 'ethereal fluid,' which he was convinced would raise his hollow globe, if only he could have obtained a supply! Had he known of the light gases, doubtless the discovery of aerial navigation would have been precipitated by three or four hundred years. In most instances, indeed, the person who obtains the credit of discovery is merely the one who puts the top spoke in the ladder by which the special truth is reached—the said ladder having been built up laboriously by other men, without whose exertions the last operator would never have been able to attain the place where his efforts would have a chance of success.

Mendoza and Schott, Jesuits, of Portugal and Germany respectively, took up the speculations of Albert nearly two hundred and fifty years later. The latter sighed for some supernatural power to bring down the 'ethereal essence' which he wanted. Father Laurus supposed the early morning dew to be the condensation of this essence, which had fallen in the night; and put forth many equally absurd propositions, which indicated the extreme shallowness of the knowledge of men at that time, who pretended to learning, and who indeed were learned according to their day and generation.

Cardan, soon after this, and later still Fabry, proposed the use of fire, but they appear to have confined themselves entirely to speculation.

About 1645, Cyrano de Bergerac, an accomplished man in every branch of knowledge, wrote a satirical book, which he calls 'The Comical History of the States and Kingdoms of the Sun and Moon,' which we can only

allude to here as containing a mass of witty exposure of fallacies, and clever suggestions of truths, and which, no doubt, gave to our own Swift the idea of 'Gulliver's Travels.'

John Wilkins, Bishop of Chester (ob. 1672), who was very clever as a mechanician, maintains, in a pamphlet, 'Concerning the New World,' that it would be possible to make a journey to the moon if he could be conveyed for a starting-point to some place beyond the reach of the earth's attraction. These 'ifs,' indeed, are the bugbears of speculators in scientific as in other matters. 'If,' said Archimedes, 'I had whereon to stand, I would move the world;' and 'If,' said Bishop Wilkins, 'you will cause the suspension of an imperative and necessary law of nature, I will go to the moon.'

Francis Lana (c. 1660), a Jesuit, proposed to make hollow spheres of copper, which being exhausted of air, would float in our ordinary atmosphere; but every tyro in natural philosophy at the present day will at once see the utter absurdity of the scheme.

A vacuum, then, or some hypothetical æther, seems to have been the only means of ascension which suggested themselves to men up to this time; and ballooning then seemed to be in a fair way of dying in the protracted throes of birth, for the practical experimenters do not seem to have encouraged the idea of employing fire, though we have seen that it was suggested theoretically by some before this time.

The first persons who tested their aerial theories by actual demonstration, and showed by this best of all proofs the possibility of men rising into the air, were the Montgolfiers, paper-manufacturers of Annonay, a town not far from Lyons.

It is singular that the idea which led them to a successful elucidation of their problem should have been rather of a poetical than a practical kind. They observed that smoke and clouds ascended into the air, and thought, by forming an artificial smoky cloud in the interior of some light receptacle, to insure the rising of the vessel in the air. They

fancied they could supply the place of the air inside their machine with smoke, which was to be the rising power. However erroneous was this notion in conception, it led to a right practical result—not, however, by supplying the place of the contained air with smoke, but by rarefying that air by the action of heat.

The first balloon they made was in the form of a parallelopiped. This machine was of the capacity of about forty feet; and there was an opening in the lower part in which was inserted or suspended some burning material, the heat of which rarefied the air inside, and caused the balloon to ascend in the manner now so familiar to every one.

The Montgolfiers, encouraged by the success of their first experiment, proceeded to enlarge the capacity of their trial machines. In 1783 they made one of spherical shape, 35 feet in diameter, and containing 23,000 feet. It was capable of raising 500 pounds.

We have here an instance of the numerous minor difficulties which attend inventors: instead of the sponge saturated with inflammable oil or spirit of our times, they effected their purpose by the combustion of a mixture of chopped straw and wool, the latter ingredient seeming to show that the idea of the cloud was not yet eradicated from the minds of the inventors. This, the first real balloon ascent, was most successful. The bag rose 6000 feet above the surface of the earth, and, after a time, fell nearly a mile and a half from the point of its departure.

Stephen Montgolfier made several experiments under the auspices of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, each time constructing a larger balloon, and achieving a more successful ascent. The inhabitants of Annonay still celebrate the memory of their distinguished townsmen by an annual fête, an indispensable feature of which is the ascent of a huge Montgolfière.

When these marvels were attracting the attention of all the French world, a noted chemist named Pilatre du Rosier first made his appearance as an experimenter in

this science, attracted thereto by the success of the Montgolfiers. He was the first to attempt an actual ascent himself, though on several prior occasions small animals had been despatched to the azure. M. Pilatre du Rosier attached himself to a balloon much larger than any before constructed (viz. 74 × 48 feet); and after several experiments while the balloon was confined by ropes, at last ventured to cast himself off from earth, and commence an aerial voyage. This was a very encouraging trial. He ascended to a height of about 3000 feet, and came down at the distance of five miles from the spot whence he rose.

We must leave M. Pilatre du Rosier for the present, but shall have to renew his acquaintance under melancholy circumstances; meanwhile we shall conclude this account of air-inflated balloons with a short description of the largest one of which we have any account. This monster was made at Lyons, 1784. It was 130 feet high, and 105 in diameter, while it would hold 540,000 feet of rarefied air. Its lifting power is stated at six men and 3200 pounds of ballast. On 19th January, 1784, having only taken seventeen minutes in preparation, it ascended with seven persons in the car. After attaining an elevation of something more than 3000 feet, a sudden rent of about 50 feet in extent brought the machine and party quickly to the ground, but happily without injury to any one.

In the succeeding month the 'European Magazine' says that eighteen persons ascended from Naples; and in Cunningham's Cyclopædia it is stated that in 1784 fifteen persons went up by a large balloon at Rouen, and in the same year Lunardi made his first ascent in London. This therefore brings us to the consideration of gas-inflated balloons.

Hydrogen gas had long been known; but its nature and peculiar qualities were, to a great extent, unknown, especially its weight, as compared with common air. Mr. Henry Cavendish having occasion to experiment upon it about the year

1766, found that its weight was only about one-seventh part of that of an equal bulk of atmospheric air. So apparent a method of obtaining the lifting power for balloons did not, of course, escape the attention of aerial philosophers. Dr. Black, about 1768, made some suggestions as to its employment; and Mr. Tiberius Cavallo (name of terrible import!) actually succeeded in elevating, by means of hydrogen gas, some soap bubbles!

The Messrs. Roberts and Professor Charles were the first to make an actual ascent in a balloon inflated with this gas. Several experiments with small balloons by themselves and the Count Zambecari were so successful as to induce them to trust themselves to a larger one of the same kind.

Accordingly one was made about 27 feet in diameter, and possessing raising power sufficient for two persons, with the necessary ballast. On this occasion we find the first use of the valve, for the escape of gas in the elevated regions to which they aspired to ascend, by which they guarded against danger from explosion. On the 1st December, 1783, one of the Robertses and Professor Charles made an ascent from Paris in this balloon: they only attained, it is said, the height of 600 feet, and came down at the distance of 27 miles, an hour and three-quarters having been occupied in the transit. Mr. Roberts having left the car, his companion thought he would have a solitary cruise, and so set out: he found himself, after about 20 minutes, at an elevation of 9,000 feet from the earth. The aeronaut suffered, on this occasion, very much from cold, and found the expansion of the gas so great that he had to congratulate himself on having provided a valve for its liberation, otherwise doubtless an explosion would have caused the destruction of the balloon and the precipitate descent of the aeronaut from his fearful elevation. The extreme height attained was 10,500 feet.

M. Blanchard made an ascent in 1784, when he tried some contrivances for steering: these con-

sisted of a rudder and two wings. He found them, however, of no use either in this or subsequent ascents; although MM. Morveau and Bertrand reported the same year that they found a similar apparatus to exert a very perceptible influence. The Messrs. Roberts also reported that they found oars useful in a calm, inasmuch as by their aid the balloon described the segment of an ellipse, whose shortest diameter was 6000 feet. On this journey they accomplished a distance of 150 miles in six hours and a half. In July, 1784, they made another ascent, in which the Duke of Orleans took part. This was a very perilous affair; for, getting into a region of hurricanes, the balloon became so distended as to be in danger of bursting, and they were obliged to rend the silk in two or three places, and thus at great risk reached the ground again.

Two plans were now proposed for economizing gas and ballast by the use of compound balloons; the first plan was to have a bag of atmospheric air within the balloon, to be acted upon by means of bellows. The Duc de Chartres was the first who experimented under these conditions; but the unfavourable state of the elements prevented the invention from being fairly tried, and the duke had a narrow escape of his life.

The second plan for a compound balloon was to have an upper one of gas and a lower one of rarefied air. It was supposed that, by the application of fire to the lower machine, which acted as ballast to the upper one, its weight would be diminished and the whole affair would ascend, while a tendency downwards would be produced by merely letting the fire die out, when the air inside the lower balloon would gradually cool and resume its original density, or be supplemented by an influx of the surrounding atmosphere. Pilatre du Rosier, whom we have seen to have been a daring adventurer in the realms of air, with a companion, M. Romaine, anxious to return a visit which had been paid to France by Dr. Jeffreys and M. Blanchard, started, in a machine

of this construction, from Boulogne, 15th June, 1785, with the intention of crossing the English Channel. Their ascent was made without accident, and everything seemed to promise a favourable termination to the adventure; but before long the spectators noticed the upper balloon to swell considerably, and the aeronauts to be in some confusion, as if trying to bring the valve into action. Shortly afterwards, at an altitude, as is conjectured, of about a mile from the ground, the lower balloon caught fire. Whether the fire communicated itself to the upper one cannot be known, for both the ill-fated aeronauts were killed. No explosion was heard, but the upper balloon collapsed soon after, and came down with terrific rapidity with its unlucky passengers. Pilatre du Rosier was dead when taken up; M. Romaine lived a short time after, but was unable to give any account of the disastrous transaction.

A remarkable voyage was made soon after this time by M. Testu: his balloon was made of tiffany, and was supplied with oars or wings. He started from Paris in the early evening, and after attaining a height of 2800 feet, to avoid the waste of gas, he endeavoured to use the wings for the purpose of descent: he found them, however, of little use, and only after a considerable period came to the earth. Here he was surrounded by the occupier of the field and his labourers, who demanded payment for damage, and in default took him prisoner, drawing the balloon along by ropes. The oars having been broken off, and his mantle taken from him, he found the buoyancy of his machine so much increased that he ventured to cut the ropes by which he was held prisoner, and left the surly country people to their own disappointment. He reascended to some considerable height, when, hearing the 'horn of chase,' he pulled his valve, and came near the ground. A huntsman rode up, and M. Testu, fearing, perhaps, a repetition of the farmer's incivility, threw out some ballast, and ascended for the third time. It was now night, when, having passed through some dense

clouds, he came into a region of storms, and spent several hours in the midst of the most terrific thunder and lightning. He accomplished his descent about four o'clock in the morning, having been afloat twelve hours and travelled sixty-three miles.

Let us now, again retracing our steps a little, see how matters went on in England.

The first balloon ascent in London was from the Artillery Ground, and was launched by Count Zambecari. It was filled with hydrogen gas, and was ten feet in diameter.

Mr. Tytler of Edinburgh ascended from that city on the 27th August, 1784; and Vincent Lunardi, an Italian, made the first personal ascent in England on the 15th September, 1784. His balloon had no valve, the gas being discharged, by pressure, from the neck, which was left open. This ascent was also made from the Artillery Ground, and Lunardi took with him two or three small animals. After a two hours' voyage he descended near Ware. Lunardi made many interesting ascents in Scotland, which he described in a series of letters published in 1785.

The next was made by M. Blanchard and Professor Shelden. The latter was landed fourteen miles from Chelsea, whence they started, but M. Blanchard reascended, and made his final descent near Rumsey in Hampshire, a distance of seventy-five miles.

Sadler, of whom more anon, made his first ascent from Oxford in 1784, and in the ensuing winter M. Blanchard and Dr. Jeffreys crossed the Straits of Dover. The point of departure was the top of Shakspeare's Cliff. Owing to some deficiency of gas it was found that the balloon was scarcely equal to the task of carrying two men, so that nearly all the ballast had to be thrown away before starting. They rose gently, and proceeded slowly on account of the lightness of the winds; and, soon after starting, had the horrid conviction forced upon them that they were descending. They directly threw out half their ballast; but as that did not check their descent the

rest followed, together with some books, by which for a time the balloon was relieved, and they began to ascend. When nearly across the Channel they again approached too near to be pleasant to the surface, and were obliged to part with the remainder of their books and every ponderous article that could be dispensed with. This proved scarcely enough; and they made preparations for cutting away the boat or car, having previously made themselves fast to the net-work by slings. This last resort, however, was unnecessary, for when the balloon felt the land breezes she began again to ascend, and they finally came to the ground in the forest of Guennes. M. Blanchard received from the King of France a gift of 12,000 livres and an annuity of 1,200.

M. Blanchard was the inventor of the parachute; and in the course of a journey of 300 miles from Lisle, he sent down a dog by means of one of these instruments, and the innocent victim of the experiment reached the ground in safety. Garnerin improved on the parachute, and often used it, both in the way Blanchard had done and by descending himself. On one occasion he went up from North Audley Street; and when at such a height as scarcely to be distinguishable in the car, he left it, attached to the parachute. The machine came to grief in some way, and so did M. Garnerin. He fell in a field at St. Pancras, and was severely cut and bruised by the fall (1802.)

In the next year we have an account of the first ascent made ostensibly for scientific purposes independent of the science of *aërostation* itself. This was undertaken by MM. Robertson and Schoest, from Hamburg; and was succeeded by observations atmospheric and magnetic by Mr. Robertson and another coadjutor, M. Sacharof. This kind of inquiry was pursued with greater results by Gay-Lussac and his assistants, who prepared a great number of data for inquirers into those subjects. They also made many interesting experiments and observations in electricity. During his ascents Lussac attained a much

greater elevation than any of his predecessors. In one the barometer marked only 12.95 inches, which he calculated to indicate a height of nearly four and a half miles.

In 1806 M. Mosment fell out of his car near Lisle, and was dashed to pieces.

A proposal about this time by a German to facilitate walking by attaching a balloon to the head of a man, yet not sufficiently powerful to raise him from the ground, produced the following epigram:—

'The Frenchman, volatile and light,
Aspires to wing the air in flight.
The German, heavy and profound,
With nimble feet would trip the ground.
Philosophers! do what you will;
But—"Nature will be Nature still."

The widow of Marshal Villeron, in her 80th year, was incredulous, but when she saw an ascent, exclaimed, 'There can be no doubt about it: the secret of living for ever will be found out when I shall be dead.' The prince, who was afterwards Louis XVIII., made the following impromptu on seeing an ascent:—

'Les Anglais, nation trop fière
S'arrogent l'empire des mers,
Les Français, nation légère,
S'emparent de celui des airs.'

In 1807 Garnerin continued his ascents in France—on one occasion travelling 45 leagues in seven hours, and on another 300 miles in about the same time. This speed was much exceeded in one of his excursions from London. He made the distance thence to Colchester, sixty miles, in three-quarters of an hour.

Sadler in 1813 attempted to cross from Dublin to England, and commenced his voyage under favourable auspices. In three hours he approached very near to the Welsh coast, but a change of wind drove him off. Fearful of the consequences, he descended into the sea in the neighbourhood of some ships that were beating down Channel, but was mortified and disgusted to find that no notice was taken of his perilous position. Having got rid of his ballast, he was fortunately able to rise again, and after some time to espy some other ships; but

when he again descended to the surface he found the wind so strong and his motion so rapid that none of the ships could overtake him. He at last checked the rapidity of his motion by letting out a considerable quantity of gas.

When he was overtaken the sailors were afraid to go near him, for fear of being entangled in the netting; but Sadler's fertile imagination, sharpened by the peril of his situation, suggested to them the plan of running the balloon through with their bowsprit, and at the same time throwing him a rope, by which he was hauled on board. An account of somewhat similar adventures by a Mr. Crosbie, from Dublin, occurs about the same time.

Lieut. Harris ascended from the 'Eagle Tavern' in 1824, accompanied by a lady. He had two valves: the cord of the larger one was incautiously fastened to the hoop, so that when the balloon elongated after expansion the line tightened, permitting a considerable escape of gas. The *aéronaut*, quite ignorant of the real cause of the mishap, fancied the silk had rent near the top, and seems to have been able to do nothing to avert the impending catastrophe. The balloon was precipitated with such force to the earth that Harris was killed on the spot; the young woman, however, afterwards recovered.

Aéronauts were now busy all over the world; but we can do no more than mention the names of Major Money, Zambeccari, and Baldwin, who did good service in the early times of ballooning (1785, *et seq.*); Hampton, Cocking, Captain Lowden, Gale, Gypson, and a host of other adventurers in the regions of air. Even our notice of the veteran Green must be confined to his voyage to Nassau, in company with Messrs. Robert Hollond and Monck Mason. This remarkable adventure took effect in 1836 from Vauxhall Gardens. Great preparations had been made to perform such a journey as had never before been; provisions and ballast sufficient for any emergency had been got together, with passports directed to all parts of the Continent; guide-ropes,

which were intended to trail on the ground, and fix the distance from the surface, were provided, with hollow floats of copper to be used at sea. The travellers having started in the afternoon, took an easterly direction, and passed directly over Canterbury, then crossing the sea, Belgium, and the Rhine, finally descended at dawn of day the next morning at Nassau, whence the balloon was afterwards named. The drag and guide-ropes did not answer the expectations formed of them; and indeed none but enthusiasts would dream of dragging ropes over the surface of the earth to the danger and discomfort of the people dwelling thereon.

Mr. Green, during many years of his public life, was the friendly rival of Mr. Henry Coxwell, who is the *aéronaut*, *par excellence*, of our times, and by far the most ready and experienced manager of a balloon that the world has yet seen. For many years—we believe indeed during his whole life—he has been engaged, though not exclusively, in this and cognate pursuits.

This gentleman is a member of an old county family resident at Ablington House, Gloucestershire, in constant succession since the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth.

The *aéronaut* is the youngest son of the late Captain Coxwell, R.N., and was himself intended for the military service, but disappointed of the requisite influence by the untimely death of his father. He had achieved a continental reputation as an *aéronaut* many years ago. We have now before us an immense batch of German literature occupied chiefly with descriptions of his ascents. In Prussia he has on several occasions experimented with his war-balloon to the wonder and gratification of the members of the government who employed him. He has frequently, also, been in communication with our own government; but without inducing them to take much interest in the matter.

Mr. Coxwell has made very nearly five hundred ascents. We must content ourselves with noticing only a very few. Perhaps the most re-

markable, on many accounts, is that in which he accompanied Mr. Gypson, Mr. Albert Smith, and Mr. Pridmore, 6th July, 1847. The ascent was made with Mr. Gypson's balloon from Vauxhall; and at a considerable elevation a display of fireworks took place from the car, immediately after which a tremendous storm arose, of which Mr. Coxwell writes:—

‘Grand as our fireworks appeared, we were presently called upon to behold a scene that was more awfully grand and impressive. As if to show the puny effects of man's most skilful methods of displaying fireworks, indignant nature blazed forth one immense sheet of lightning,’

which extended far throughout the regions of space. The storm passed over quickly, and all was fair again; but soon after, from some cause still unexplained, a rent occurred near the top of the balloon, which immediately collapsed, and began to descend with frightful rapidity. With admirable presence of mind Mr. Coxwell with his knife liberated the neck of the balloon, which, ascending towards the crown, allowed the machine to assume the form of a parachute. This precaution proved successful, for although they came to the ground with terrific violence, none of the aeronauts sustained serious injury.

Another remarkable voyage of Mr. Coxwell's was commenced, 16th June, 1857, at North Woolwich, and terminated near Tavistock, the distance (nearly 250 miles) having been performed in five hours, or considerably less than the time occupied by the express railway-trains. Recently Mr. Coxwell, in company with Colonel M'Donald and several officers of the Rifle Brigade, travelled from Winchester Barracks to Harrow (nearly seventy miles) in one hour and six minutes.

Of the ascents made last and continued this year for meteorological observations, many papers have lately appeared; ours confines itself more to the history of balloons, and especially are we interested in the Mammoth balloon and its clever contriver, Mr. Coxwell, the intrepid manager of those ascents. The last ascent of the past year's series

took place at Wolverhampton on the 5th September. Mr. Glaisher's testimony to the ability of the aeronaut is hearty and enthusiastic. He expressly says that the power of taking observations at a great height depends absolutely on the skill of the conductor of the balloon. He congratulates the Association on having secured the services of Mr. Coxwell, who has made 480 ascents, has great scientific knowledge, and knows the ‘why’ and the ‘because’ of all his operations.

They reached on this occasion to a height of over six miles, and sufficiently ascertained that this was almost the limit to which the endurance of man's physical capacity can carry him. For some time before that height had been reached Mr. Glaisher had been unable to record his observations, and had become insensible, while Mr. Coxwell was somewhat overcome by the effects of the rare atmosphere in which they were moving; indeed, when he at last became convinced that he had gone as high as was consistent with prudence, and endeavoured to reach the connecting cord to open the valve, he found his hands black and benumbed so as to be utterly powerless; and here Mr. Coxwell's never-failing presence of mind availed them in the last extremity, for, seizing the cord with his teeth, he opened the valve, and as a consequence they were soon speeding towards the lower regions. What might have been the result if Mr. Coxwell's teeth had failed him as well as his hands is too horrible for conjecture. The two daring aerial sailors might have died, while their ship traversed the vast realms of space, like Coleridge's spectre-ship or the ‘Flying Dutchman.’ It is just possible that it might have continued its weird voyage for years in those quiet realms where the action of the elements for the effects of decay in either organic or inorganic substances we suppose to be almost inappreciable.

We are all familiar with Nadar's recent perilous ascent in the ‘Giant’ balloon, which he seems to think destined to solve the aerial problem.

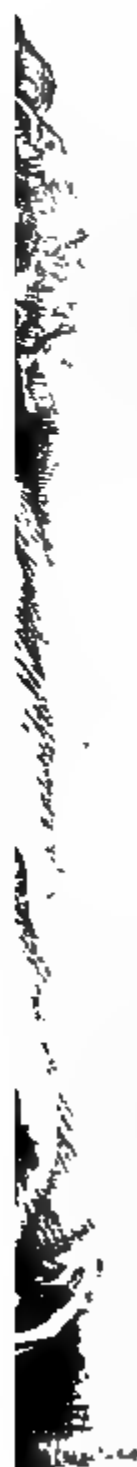
Since the directors of the Crystal Palace will allow 'London Society' to form a judgment at the rate of a shilling a head, we may pass over the 'Giant' without further notice in our historical summary.

The French have used balloons in warfare on several occasions. It is said that at the battle of Fleurus a surprise was prevented by a reconnaissance conducted in this manner. In the battle of Liege, during the French Revolution, the success of the victors was, for the most part, secured by the same means: the weak places of the enemy's lines were detected, attacked, and forced. A balloon was also used to examine the fortress of Ehrenbreitzen, which, on account of its height, could have been seen in no other way.

Explorations have been undertaken in Australia and America, and many daring ascents made in those countries; but our space is exhausted. Should any one object to the science of ballooning, '*Cui bono?*' we cannot do better than reply in the words of Mr. Coxwell, extracted from a recent publication of his:—

'If astronomy, geology, steam power, electricity, and nautical science cannot

boast of having made one bound towards perfection, why should ballooning? We have only just succeeded in making ships go against the wind, and why should we despair of mastering an aerial vehicle? The difficulties to be surmounted are well understood, and for a time baffle ingenuity; but I would urge renewed attempts, for remember, it is not more than eighty years since the first balloon travelled the air; and if we could now inspect a specimen of a boat constructed eighty years after men began to venture on the water, depend upon it we would sooner cross the Atlantic in the Great Eastern than venture to Gravesend in the primitive piny of our forefathers. Ballooning as an art, is, I am convinced, steadily advancing; and although the uninitiated may not observe much progress, because the machine does not strikingly deviate from the wind, yet the various appurtenances gradually undergo improvement, and in a short time I have no doubt that balloons, like the old men of war, will be cast aside for new models; and then, just as the application of steam requires a reconstruction of our war vessels, so will some new power demand a similar alteration for vessels in the air; so that the difficulties which appeared insurmountable at the beginning of the nineteenth century may be at last dispelled, and the great high-road to all the nations of the earth (the atmosphere) may be travelled triumphantly.'



Drawn by A. Pasquier.

HERBERT FREER'S PERPLEXITIES.

[See the Story

HERBERT FREER'S PERPLEXITIES:

A Love Story for Christmas.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

'A LUCKY YOUNG DOG.'

WHEN Herbert Freer first settled in Severnsbury he would have seemed to you, or indeed to any one, about the most unlikely man in England to have furnished such a title as that which I have prefixed to the story I have to tell.

Perplexities indeed! How should he have any? A young fellow of thirty, he had come down there to manage the Severnsbury branch of the Metropolitan and District Banking Company. He had a salary of six hundred a year, which, as everybody knows, is double the income on which (it has been conceded by the 'Times,') a man may lawfully marry. Nay, besides this he had, it was known, some interest as partner in the bank itself. His interest, *he said*, was merely that which Lazarus had in the dinner of Dives. He was allowed to pocket now and then a sovereign which could not be conveniently crammed into the bags of the chairman and directors; but his own profits in that way were altogether contingent on the success of the exertions of himself and his brother managers to earn more money than these bags could be made to hold. So talked Herbert Freer of himself. But then a young fellow who is doing well in the world is apt to speak banteringly of his income. We know that there are houses where even the post of Lazarus would be sought by many candidates. And everybody in Severnsbury knew that the Metropolitan and District Bank was one of those good things in which a share is not to be had by outsiders at any price, and in which a share, being once had, is not lightly surrendered. Then, too, it was known that Herbert's father had died in very comfortable circumstances, and that Herbert had inherited all.

Probably gossip was therefore not far wrong in setting down the young manager's income at something like fifteen hundred a year, and in assuming that (though six hundred a year is surely worth looking after) he filled his official post not so much because of the income it gave him as because it gave him something, without giving him over-much, to do. At the same time it was granted that he did his work in no mere spirit of diletantism. He had the reputation of being a thoroughly good man of business—not easily over-reached, and yet not over-reaching. Much as his clerks liked him they respected him more. Add to these advantages that he had a frank and winning way, a good temper, good health, and a handsome person, and we may well ask what more need he wish that Fortune should do for him.

Herbert Freer, in short, was declared by everybody to be 'a very lucky young dog;' and, what was more to his credit (and is not invariably the fact with lucky young dogs as a species), he was admitted by most people to deserve his luck.

Yet, for all this, we shall see in the sequel that it was not in any serene heaven of his own that he lived;—that he had to breathe the common, perturbed air like the rest of us;—had his anxieties as we have ours, and walked out often with black care for an attendant;—had to wrestle hard with doubts and indecisions;—knew how hard is the pillow to which sleep will not come;—often 'heard the chimes at midnight' while he tried in vain to balance conscience with expediency;—in a word, that he too was taken prisoner by the horrid sphinx who tries us all with the riddles that we have to answer on peril of our lives,

and was well-nigh drowned in perplexities, as, indeed, too many of us are in this most perplexing world.

Moreover, if a young lady's opinion be of weight, it is undeniable that in Severnsbury there were many estimable young ladies who would have been ready to declare that for a man like Herbert Freer to remain unmarried as he did was nothing less than a clear tempting of Providence, a clear laying of himself open to all manner of troubles and perplexities from which they themselves would, any of them, have undertaken to guard him. For Herbert, it must be admitted, brought with him the reputation of being of a disposition, in matters amatory, vexatious both to mammas and daughters; and it soon appeared that he really deserved this reputation. No angler of course expects to land a salmon as easily as a gudgeon. But allowing that a good fish is worth some little trouble, and indeed has a right to decline to be caught without giving trouble, yet even the most patient of anglers, of mammas, of daughters, may be provoked and wearied out sometimes; and Herbert, it was complained, would neither take a bait nor leave it alone. No one was more ready than he to join the girls in their pic-nics—to row them on the river—to walk with them—to talk with them—to read poetry to them—even to write verses for them—to dance with them—to take them to concerts and lectures—in short, to be their assiduous dangler in any of the thousand and one capacities in which danglers are so useful. But what avail pic-nicings and boatings, moonlight walkings and moony talkings, if they are to be merely their own reward? Ladies of practical habits, alive to the stern realities of milliners' bills and unmarried angels, look on these trivial gallantries as only the necessary preliminaries to more important negotiations. To persist in them too long is a mere 'tarrying in the letter that killeth' deeply cherished hopes. And somehow these charming junketings, no matter how dexterously contrived or how often repeated, did not bring about that softening of

the heart, or softening of the brain (I am really not quite clear which is the most correct expression), without which even the best-nurtured young men continue strangely obdurate to those tender impressions which are so beautiful on materials of the due plasticity. Herbert, in short, obstinately delayed to 'range' himself. As Napoleon, or some other general, complained of English soldiers that they were by nature so obtuse and thick-headed that when, according to all known rules of war they had been fairly beaten they could not understand it, but out of sheer ignorance and stupidity went on fighting—so an accusation of precisely the opposite nature might with justice have been brought against the young gentleman now under criticism. His fair foes surrendered to him at discretion, laid down their arms, and craved only to preserve life at the sacrifice of liberty: yet he was so dull he would not understand that they had surrendered at all. He went on still in the trivial warfare of an everyday flirtation, and failed to see that serious opposition was no longer offered to him. As for marching home in triumph with a trembling prisoner in chains behind him, as a gallant young conquering hero ought to march—this was what Herbert Freer could by no means be induced to do.

To drop the fighting metaphor, as this is to be quite a peaceful story—out of his excessive good-nature—out of his obliging disposition—out of his amiability, his friendliness, his general *bonhomie*, there had grown a belief that these very qualities were what prevented and would prevent him from ever seriously falling in love. It was argued (not certainly by very profound logicians) that a young man who was politeness itself would shrink from doing so uncivil a thing as to pass by and give the cut direct to all the young ladies of Severnsbury save one. Again and again it had been announced by the established gossips that he *was* engaged to and about to marry the eldest Miss Fetherfew, the youngest Miss Fetherfew, the second Miss Fether-

few, Miss Bertha Peacock, Miss Woodley (niece to old Colonel Woodley)—nay, he had even been talked about in connection with the venerable Miss Phillips herself (whose age was guessed to be about a thousand, and whose money in the funds about a million). But he only let this talk ebb and flow at its own sweet will. When its ripples dashed right up against him sometimes, he skipped out of the way of them; sometimes he met the small deluge with a laugh and a joke. As for a serious denial or a serious confirmation he was too wise to give it. For he knew, as we all know, that in all such gossip the word of the supposed principal in matrimonial arrangements is the last word that is believed. So rumour went on prophesying, and he contented himself with simply letting the prophecies remain unfulfilled. Such had been the state of affairs for nearly two years; and Severnsbury had at last become quite incredulous. A settled conviction had grown up in the minds of Herbert's acquaintance that he had not in him the stuff of which a lover is made. For a lover must have his heats and impetuosities, his eagerness, his strokes (it may be almost admitted) of sharp practice against rivals; and Herbert had shown so far none of these qualities. He had exhibited himself only in the character of an easy, good-tempered, clever, and rather careless fellow. When, therefore, it was blown about by old Mrs. Fetherfew that she was *sure* he was 'very sweet on Miss Foster,' and that she (Mrs. Fetherfew) was *quite* sure there really was 'something in it' this time, Severnsbury only shook its wise head and declined to have its credulity imposed on any more. Mrs. Fetherfew talked, as the winds of heaven blow, just as she listed; but it was said that if she talked as freely as the winds she also talked as idly; and so it came about that she was just as little regarded as they.

CHAPTER II.

'LIKE A HOUSE ON FIRE.'

Herbert's acquaintance with the Fosters was not more than a month

old when this latest gossip first began to gain ground; and in order that we may see how far it had really any foundation—how far it merely resembled the many other idle rumours that had gone before it—we shall go back to the beginning of this acquaintance.

Of course when Herbert first came to Severnsbury he came well provided with letters of introduction. And even had he not done so, and had the repute of fifteen hundred a year not been in itself a tolerably good introduction, he would not have been long without acquaintances. Amongst other notes, he had brought one to Captain Foster; but he had kept it unrepresented so long that at last he had become ashamed to present it at all, and so he had, instead of doing so, simply put it in the fire. He had, indeed, met the captain once or twice at other people's houses, and so had come to be on speaking terms with him; but the acquaintance had never become more than a casual one. Wandering, however, one evening down the terrace in which the captain lived, he noticed at the door of his house the figure of a young man, who pulled the bell with, apparently, some little hesitation, stooped down after having done so as if to listen whether it had rung or not, and, seemingly having satisfied himself that it had *not*, descended the steps, and was walking off briskly with that relieved expression of countenance which a man wears when he has suddenly decided to put off a call which he is not over-anxious to make; but in turning to walk off he turned face to face with Herbert.

'Do you often do that, Phil? Are you ringing at *all* the doors and running away, or merely taking them in a casual way?'

The runaway was one of Herbert's most intimate companions, by name Philip Grey.

'Oh! confound it,' he said, 'I have pulled two or three times, and either it doesn't ring or they have seen me through the window and don't care to answer it. Besides the captain is such a bore I am glad to have an excuse for going away.'

Herbert laughed. 'Then let us

have a walk,' he said, and linking their arms they turned and had a walk for about two paces when they found themselves in the arms of Captain Foster himself, who had come on them at that instant un-awares from behind.

'Well, I declare,' said Philip Grey; 'I was just trying to persuade Freer to call with me and see you.'

'Were you indeed; then I hope he will at any rate be persuaded by the two of us.'

Herbert bowed and said, 'Very happy.'

The captain rang, and having perhaps the knack of ringing his own bell better than any one else, or being perhaps more in earnest than Philip Grey, his ring was answered at once.

'I wonder whether he heard me call him a bore,' muttered Philip.

'I fancy he did,' said Herbert.

And, so speculating, the young men entered with their host; and this was the manner of Herbert Freer's first introduction to the house of Captain Foster. How often, I wonder, do hosts and guests meet, and chat, and entertain each other with similar frankness and cordiality! Whether Captain Foster really had overheard that remark of Philip Grey's or not, he made no sign of having done so. But how many of us would like occasionally to let our dear friends know that we are aware of the lie they have just told us, only that courtesy condemns us to silence and hypocrisy! The gallant captain led his friends in and seated them at his table. He gave them of his wine and of his cigars; he entertained them with what he sincerely believed to be very brilliant conversation; and all the while, for anything I know, he was thinking of that unlucky stricture of Philip's and aiming to prove to Herbert how unjust it was. All the while, possibly, both the young gentlemen were interesting themselves less in his remarks than in certain tinkling sounds which they could barely hear, and which indicated that a piano was being played in some distant room of the house.

For Philip at least knew well enough who the pianiste was. To

say truth there had been some tender passages between him and Miss Foster, and the real cause of his indecision as to whether he should call at Captain Foster's house had arisen from doubt how she would receive him; and from a faint conviction on his part that probably it would be better that these tender-nesses should go no further. His valour, therefore, had for once exhibited itself in the better shape of discretion, prompting him to run away. But now that he was in the house he wanted to be with her, and fidgeted under the assiduous courtesies of his entertainer. So he said at last, interrogatively, in a break of the conversation, 'Miss Foster is at home then?' and pointed in the direction from whence the sound of the piano came—as if he had not been quite well aware of that fact before he entered the house. And by-and-by, after this hint and another or two like it, the captain led the young men to the drawing-room and introduced them to his daughter, who was playing there alone.

Captain Foster was a widower, and it was no secret that his means were only strait. He had indeed but little income beyond the half pay on which he had retired; and though it could not be said of him, as it was said of Lieutenant Luff, that 'his half pay did not half pay his debts,' it was known that he always lived tightly up to his resources. His daughter Ida was the eldest of his children, and had now come home, at the age of twenty, to take charge of his house. Besides her there was only Arthur left, a boy of ten. Between them there had been four others. Arthur could remember the time when there was only one little green mound besides the larger one in the cemetery. This larger one had always been there as far as he could remember: indeed it had had to be made as soon as he came into the world. But these lesser hillocks had all been made within the last five or six years, and Arthur, himself a delicate child, was left now without a playmate at all.

It happened that Herbert had never met Miss Foster before. She had during the last year or two been

much from home, and had only returned to Severnsbury a few weeks previously. But though he had not seen her he had often heard of her and of her beauty, and he was quite prepared to admire her. And Ida Foster was indeed very beautiful. Tall, dark, healthy, graceful, and animated, it seemed as if all the vigour which should have been shared by the poor little brothers and sisters had been foreseized by the first-born.

When the gentlemen entered the room she rose, shook hands with Philip, honoured Herbert with a gracious inclination of the head; and, being asked to continue playing, did so at once in a ready unhesitating way, which said pleasantly, as plainly as words could have said, that she knew she had a right to play for the reason that she really could play.

There is something very surprising—I had almost said very humiliating—in the way in which music, the most spiritual of all human arts, is often degraded into a merely mechanical work, and the trick of playing made, too evidently, a trick essentially the same in its nature as the sleight-of-hand of a conjuror. We see very ordinary women play, with a dexterity and accuracy that charm their hearers, pieces of music to compose which has tasked all the powers of the greatest masters. They execute the most difficult passages and the most brilliant movements without any apparent effort, and people cry, 'What a wonderful player!' And all the while these women may be only clever, trained automata, as soulless and unappreciative of what they do as Mr. Babbage's calculating-machine, and as unlike real musicians as that machine is unlike (and unfit to be) a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Their criticisms on music would probably be the perfection of absurdity or commonplace. They have never paused to consider the meaning of what they play, or asked what was intended to be conveyed by the grand passages they execute so readily. Sorrow, joy, anger, love, disappointment, ecstasy, despair—every emotion that thrills our mortal bodies was felt, it may

be, by the mighty master as he swept the chords and brought out these melodies. To the player it is all mere wrist-and-finger work. And yet so wonderfully correct is the mechanical performance that, as the electric current flashes through and gathers strength from the passive insulator, to the hearer all these passions may still come out and live again, evolved by her who neither feels them nor knows them.

Ida Foster was not, however, a player of this kind. Music with her was a true passion and delight, and playing second nature. Sometimes, it is true, she played, as a certain humble hero whistled, for want of thought; but oftenest she played because she found in playing peace and calm and better thoughts than came to her in the daily wrestle with the world, in the daily cares and anxieties, the daily plottings and small conspiracies with which, unhappily, young-lady life is often disturbed. At any rate she never played for mere show. And Herbert Freer, as well as his companion, soon felt that it would have been an impertinence to have formally thanked her as she passed from tune to tune and piece to piece.

There was a little air of her own composing which she played at last, and said archly—

'Mr. Freer, I hear you are a poet; will you listen to this air, and when you go home present my respectful compliments to the Muses and request them to inspire you with words to fit it?'

And Herbert, being gallant, said that if he found the Muses sitting up for him on his return home he really would put Miss Foster's requirements before them; though, on account of the great advance which had lately taken place in the price of oil, they had taken to going to bed early, and he doubted he would be too late unless he were off at once.

So, laughing, the young men took their hats and bade good-night.

There was the tinkle of water in the little air, Herbert thought, as if it were water dropping on glass; there was laughter with tears in it; there was the languor of love with

its doubts and fears in it. At any rate Herbert felt he could not be far wrong if he wrote nonsense to it, seeing that new music is so seldom set to anything else. This, therefore, is what he produced; but not before he had considerably disarranged his hair and his temper, had long sat out his fire, and nibbled the feathers off more quills than seemed at all necessary:—

* BROWN EYES.

'Dark brown, dark eyes, speaking eyes,
Life, and light, and laughter quiver
In those eyes; ah me, those eyes!
Bright brown eyes; ah me, those eyes!

'Like a planet richly glowing,
Tender meanings from them flowing,
Full of moving memories;
Bright brown eyes; ah me, those eyes!

And when Miss Foster received the effusion next day, 'with Mr. Freer's compliments,' she did not need to ask whose eyes were meant, but began, we are sorry to say, to inquire of herself whether she really had made a mark or not.

Whether Herbert also began so early to ask himself deliberately any question similar to that of Miss Foster's it would in the present stage of this history be premature to say. Possibly a new pavement had been put down in the direction of Barton Terrace, and Herbert therefore felt more pleasure in walking in that direction than he used to feel. Possibly Captain Foster's chairs had softer cushions, and fewer thorns in them than Herbert found under him elsewhere. Possibly (if the supposition be not libellous) Ida Foster's nimble fingers and gracious glances were more to his taste than those of the Misses Fetherfew. At any rate when Mrs. Fetherfew said so positively that she was quite sure there was 'something in it,' she had this much of foundation for her assertion, that Herbert, namely, had during the month then just past been less often at her own house and more frequently at Captain Foster's than she found at all agreeable to the plans she had herself matured for Herbert's happiness, and than argued appreciation of the hospitality she so generously proffered him on all occasions of their meeting.

Herbert, in fact, found his intimacy with the Fosters pleasant and agreeable, and it throve apace. It progressed, said Phil Grey, 'like a house on fire.' And as Phil felt himself a little eclipsed, and as he knew how narrowly he had himself escaped the flames, if indeed he had escaped at all, it is to be feared he looked on with something of the pleased interest and very doubtful commiseration with which good neighbours, who happen to have had their own house burnt down, generally do look on at other people's tenements in that predicament.

CHAPTER III.

SIRENIA REDIVIVA.

In these days Herbert had a very decided fancy that he was literary; and one of the subjects on which he determined to be especially eloquent was the not very novel one of 'The Sirens.'

'When the world was very young indeed,' he wrote, 'and when the heavens were much nearer to it than they are now—when the father of the gods used to come down and make love to the daughters of men—there was a fair island, in a fairer ocean, and underneath its cliffs of dazzling whiteness you might any day have seen Neptune himself riding on his dolphin in a way you can never hope to see him now. The maidens of that island were very fair to look upon, and their voices were as the hidden soul of harmony. Out of heaven there is now no beauty, nor any music to be compared with theirs. The sailors could not choose but cast anchor and remain always in their blissful company. So none who landed on that island ever returned home with tidings of its wonders.'

'In process of time, however, one passed that way who stopped the ears of his crew with wax, and caused them to bind him to the mast, that so they might sail under the shadow of the island, and he might hear the harmony and yet not be induced to stay. Then they saw that the cliffs so dazzlingly white were of the bleached bones of men, and they

concluded that the maidens who were so fair, and sang so sweetly, were really no better than they should be; if, indeed, they were not mere cannibal young females.

'Since then the world has grown a great deal older, and its people think themselves a great deal wiser. The stars have gone much further back and become astronomical. That Elysian ocean has wholly dried up. That enchanted island is to be found in no map extant. Only the sirens, under changed names, and wearing modern dresses, still remain, and still to our extreme inconvenience retain their old unsocial and very disagreeable habits.'

That this, and many pages to which it was introductory, was a piece of very fine writing which would be jumped at by any editor in England before whom it might be held up—though unfortunately the essay *was* apropos of nothing particular—it never entered Herbert's mind to doubt. But that the fable could have any practical moral for himself to take to heart: that sirens did really still exist amongst his own acquaintance disguised in genteel crinoline and playing elegantly on pianos: nay, even that he himself was at that moment in imminent danger of having his own bones clean picked by one—this was a *reductio ad absurdum* which if put before him he would have scouted with disdain.

And yet if he had been asked what it was that attracted him, and made him flutter round Ida Foster, as a moth flutters round a candle, he could have given but poor reasons. He would have said she had a bright eye—yet he had read Tennyson, and might have remembered that so had wily Vivien. He would have said she had a sweet voice—yet he had read Milton, and might have called to mind that the *fallen* angels sang very sweetly. He would have said she had a gentle touch—yet he kept a cat and had observed its habits. He would have said she had a pretty name—yet he would have needed no one to remind him that that was a merit due more to her godfathers and godmothers than herself. The truth must be

told. Herbert, the superb—Herbert, the cool, the self-possessed—was really by no means so much himself as he used to be. And Ida, who had angled often in sport, was angling now in earnest. It is painful to us to have so soon to dethrone a young lady who may have been mistaken for a heroine. But the spoils of her skill had been already more than a woman with a heart ever does gain. Hitherto she had practised only for scientific purposes. She had studied with all the coolness of an anatomist the degree of torture which her unhappy subjects might be made to endure, without making such an exhibition of themselves as would be positively disagreeable to her. And when this stage was reached, it had been her wont to exchange her subject for another one. Cool, clever, and heartless, she had brought flirtation probably to as high a pitch of perfection as it is destined ever to attain. She knew exactly how far she could go to inflict the maximum of mischief without openly compromising herself, and beyond this point she never went. She had never yet failed to enslave when she fairly bent herself to her task, and she had every confidence that she—as indeed any woman to her thinking—could marry any man who came within her reach were she only sufficiently determined. And determined she was to marry Herbert Freer, even before she saw him. Not that to herself she made any pretence of loving him. Love was a passion that she knew only from witnessing its effects—very ridiculous she thought them—in others. But if she could not love, she could act very cleverly, and said contemptuously that private theatricals were more amusing off the stage than on it—in her opinion. And those who knew her best would have found it hard to tell in which of her doings she played an assumed part; in which she was herself. Music was the one pursuit in which she seemed entirely in earnest, and her love of which was thoroughly sincere. If when she played she charmed all ears, let us hope, too, that she exorcised for a while her own evil

spirit, and rose from her piano and her harp with purer and less selfish thoughts than those which so soon resumed their hold upon her. And she knew that in music lay her power; but, alas! without perceiving that her power lay there, because there lay for a while nature and truth.

Herbert, for his part, might never have heard of the sirens—much less have written an essay on them. Whether it was that his hour had fully come—whether for his sins he had been doomed for a certain time to walk this earth in pain and perplexity—whether the gods had really driven him out of his wits, intending in a little while to deal still worse with him—however these things might be, in one short month Ida Foster's scheme had prospered so far that he had become her slave, and waited humbly on her in a way that he had never waited on woman before. And Phil Grey, whose vision had been a little cleared, by the way in which he had been forced to open his eyes, when Ida threw him overboard somewhat earlier than her wont, stood looking on, and making comparisons, like that which was recorded at the end of the last chapter.

Not that even a month had passed over without Herbert's beginning to have some little doubt as to Ida being in all things the 'perfect woman, nobly planned,' his fancy had at first painted her. But here again his good nature told against him. When he noticed any fault, he did not so much think worse of Ida for it, as approve his own good judgment, that he could see faults at all in one with whom he already began to suspect he was falling in love.

For example, Phil had told him in a friendly way that Ida had jilted *him*, and had hinted further, that he was, he believed, far from the first whom she had served so. Well, Herbert had admitted that such conduct was very wrong; but it is wonderful how easily we forgive unfaithfulness in love, which we imagine to have been practised in our own favour. We think, at any

rate, it is some compensation for the fair one's perfidy, that we ourselves should be kind and sympathetic with her victim; and, again, it is surprising how kindly a man really does think of his unsuccessful rival. So Herbert readily forgave Ida all her flirtations without even wishing to hear them recounted. And, if possible, he felt more friendly than ever to Philip Grey.

Then, too, one thing that Herbert most thoroughly enjoyed, was a hearty, good laugh, on due provocation; or, failing due provocation, even on no provocation at all. And he winced a little at the impassiveness of Ida. She smiled very sweetly on him, but he could never get her to join him in a real good laugh. Her calm, clear-cut face, never so far lost its self-possession—never *seemed* to be moved with common passion; and to say truth, Herbert would have liked better to see it so agitated. Yet he reflected that in all his reading he had never read that the angels themselves laughed; they, too, only smiled, and must, he thought, smile very much as Ida smiled; and a man must be hard to please indeed who finds fault with a young lady merely for being of an angelic temperament.

But there were other glimpses, also, which Herbert got into the life of the Foster household which gave him little qualms, and made him doubt whether there might not be times when his angel did not even smile. The captain always spoke to Ida more meekly than seemed consistent with parental authority. Arthur moved more noiselessly in her presence than elsewhere, and had his little eyes often fixed on her when he was speaking to other people. In a hundred ways Herbert was made to suspect that Ida had a temper, and was accustomed to make that fact noticed at home.

All these things had Herbert seen, and pondered, and laid to heart. But when did love ever pretend to base itself on judgment? He was rather proud than otherwise of feeling that he was beginning to love unwisely. He repeated to himself that line about 'not wisely, but too

well,' and it is to be feared, thought in his innermost heart that so to love was rather a noble action, and one that put him in the category of many of the most charming heroes in the best romances.

When, therefore, he walked home one night and ruminated on the fact that he had that night made Ida a passionate offer of his hand, and yet had been dismissed in ignorance what the result of that offer was to be, he then realized, perhaps for the first time, that for him, too, as for the rest of us, there was reserved doubt and trouble and perplexity; and that a book might be bound in velvet with gilt edges, as he had fancied the volume of his life's history to be, and yet have in it lines very hard to read.

For feline nature is always the same; and Ida, true to her instinct, and feeling sure of her bird, could not forbear to play with it for a while much as she would have been grieved to lose it. So she had begun the game of 'fast and loose' with Herbert, and had sent him home with such an answer as left him bound while it left her free.

CHAPTER IV.

CONSTANCY.

It happened the day after this crisis had been reached that Ida very unexpectedly, and very much to her annoyance, had to leave Severnsbury with her papa for a week. She could not well write to Herbert before starting, that as soon as he had left her she had made up her mind graciously to accept him. Besides, she had wanted to have a day or two's amusement with him; to have heard a few more protestations and a few more entreaties, and at last to have had the crowning triumph of pronouncing with her own lips the sentence of his happiness. To be hurried away, therefore, at such a time was especially provoking. There was no excuse for sending Herbert her address even. Yet to leave him to himself for a whole week in such a critical state was what Ida by no means liked. She tried to miss the train that so she

might have a chance of meeting him by accident and saying a tender word before she started. But though she was late herself the train was still later, and she caught it to a nicety.

When Herbert called that evening, therefore, as usual in Burton Terrace, and learnt that the family had gone off but a few hours before to Clifton, he believed that the 'invalid relative' and the 'urgent family matters,' which were said to be the occasion of this sudden journey, were equally apocryphal. He did not in the least believe that the journey could really have been an unforeseen and an unavoidable one, but at once concluded that it was a flight deliberately taken for the purpose of getting out of his way after the events of the preceding night. He believed this the more readily as no message appeared to be left for him; and he was too proud to ask the servant for an address which he thought had been purposely withheld.

Herbert's dog, for sitting, as was its wont, in Herbert's easy chair, caught it that night in a way which excited the utmost surprise of that quadruped: and it stood blinking its mild eyes on the rug, and licking its feet thoughtfully, as if seeking in some undiscovered speck of mud for the cause of its master's ill-usage, until at last it gave up the problem and sulked off out of sight. Herbert's cigar would not burn at all; and Herbert's lamp would burn at such a rate that it broke the chimney. Herbert's maid was never so near giving warning as she was at his unusually snappish way. Herbert walked late in the garden. The very moon shone, he thought, with a cold malicious brightness, not its wont, as if to show how insignificant he and his troubles were. It was an ill-made moon, not at all round. The ground was hard frozen. The few flowers that were left—chrysanthemums and Michaelmas daisies—hung frostbitten on their stalks with icy tears pendant, as if weeping that they were not released from such a tiresome world. Where was the good of moon, or flowers, or frost? Herbert went in and went to

bed dissatisfied with the universe in general, and with this planet in particular, and with himself more than any mortal upon it.

If to go to sleep were as easy as to go to bed what good nights we should all have! Herbert had never known such pillows. He tried them all sides up. He doubled them. He straightened them out again. Then he flung them away and lay with his head in an extemporized pit. Then he dozed off into nightmare. Then he got up and walked about his bedroom and heard quarter after quarter changed from the minster clock. What could be Ida's meaning? Was he really, after all, such a poor fellow that she merely wished to amuse herself with him as he had heard she had amused herself with others? And if so, was she not for all that really an angelic creature, and would it not be 'sweeter for her despairing than aught in the world beside?' And so the weary night wore away, as the longest nights wear away for those who are more sick than even he was; and he rose in the morning not refreshed, and looking a little—just a little paler than usual. He thought when he looked in the glass that he ought to have appeared worse than he did, and was possibly a little dissatisfied with himself for not doing so. But then he was robust, and hearts are not quite broken, nor hair turned quite white in a single night; and it was imperative, therefore, that he should give himself time.

This was only Tuesday, too, and Ida was not to return till the following Monday: (this much he *had* learnt from the maid); so that he had a week to grow pale in and to perfect the outward signs of his inward trouble. And certainly in this week he did his best. Those who have suffered from love-sickness will not need, and those who have not so suffered will not care, to read the detail of his self-torture. His temper grew worse and worse and surprised everybody who knew him. Day after day, and night after night, the same wearisome restlessness and mad discontent. Could Ida only have seen him or known

what an impression she really had made, her fears would have been relieved, and she would have felt that she could hardly have done better than try him thus, in the old-fashioned way, with absence.

Severnsbury, however, had other inhabitants besides the Fosters, and Herbert having played misanthrope all the week, did really so far recover on the Saturday evening as to take one of his favourite walks. This walk was along the terrace, above which towers Severnsbury minster, standing high and looking down on Severn waters. Away over the river lie rich fields; and in the further distance rises proudly the range of hills on which Piers Plowman so many centuries ago took his morning walk, and which offered then the same bold outline as we see to-day. To-night, however, the hills were not visible; for the darkness in December falls down early. The moon had not yet risen; and the stars, though bright, were not bright enough to bring out the hills. So Herbert leaned over the low wall and watched the stars as they lay reflected in the water. How bright and steady they were! Or if the dancing of a wave but made a star for an instant tremble out of sight, how soon it returned. Even so, he vowed, should his love burn. If it ever flickered, so soon should it resume its steadiness. If for an instant it was obliterated and disappeared, so soon should his true heart again reflect the bright image of his worship.

And then he wandered on into the minster close to where his old friend Canon Woodstock lived, and where he found him at that moment taking his canonical pleasure, walking and smoking, on his own lawn in front of his own house, in the clear frosty air, well buttoned up in his overcoat.

Herbert felt, as low-spirited people often do, unusually moral and decorous. So it jarred on his feelings, and he thought it almost irreligious for a clergyman to be smoking so near Sunday. And for his own part he felt that, thinking as he did with such tender despair about Ida, for him to smoke would

be a carnal indulgence, almost bordering on profanity. So he at first declined to join Mr. Woodstock in that exercise; and though, on repeated invitation, he relented, he only lit up at last in a melancholy way that compelled his jolly friend to ask, 'Why, Freer, what on earth's the matter?' Whereupon Herbert of course declared that nothing was the matter, and put on a preposterous affectation of gaiety which in no way deceived his quickwitted companion.

Canon Woodstock was an ecclesiastical dignitary; but he was, beyond that, 'a plain, blunt man, who loved his friend.' He had known Herbert almost as a boy; long before Herbert had come to Severnabury. Before the cigars were finished he had, with a few downright sentences, got to know pretty nearly how the wind lay with the young gentleman, and he had conveyed his sentiments with more point than politeness.

'Don't be a fool,' he said to Herbert. 'You come in with me. If you are determined to fall in love, I have got the girl for you.'

But when people are in a very high-flown, and sentimental mood, they resent the exercise of common sense on the part of their friends as something approaching very nearly to a personal affront. So when Mr. Woodstock introduced to Herbert his niece and ward as 'My niece, Miss Margaret Winter,' we doubt the young man met her with some little prejudice, and smiled inwardly, with a lofty pity, at the mind which could hint at the possibility of his ever changing in his constancy. And Miss Winter, who had heard Herbert spoken of as a merry fellow, and who was herself merry within all limits of becoming mirth, opened her eyes wide and wondered at the solemn countenance he tried to keep as long as he could.

CHAPTER V.

'TOO LATE.'

If this narrative were a mere piece of fiction, the narrator would feel that the lines had fallen to him in very stony places, and that he

was hobbling through his plot in a very lame and ungainly manner. For the storyteller who deliberately saddles himself with a hero whose conduct is not at all heroic, and with a presumptive heroine who turns out a flirt almost as soon as she has dropped her first curtsy, can hardly escape being told at once by our modern Touchstones, 'Thou'rt in a parlous state, shepherd.' But here it is the voracious historian has the advantage over the mere fictionist. If his characters really did this when they ought to have done that, or did that when they ought to have done this, well, the historian may regret it; but he cannot help it. Honest Griffiths must write all down as he finds it, happy if only he can blot with a tear the faults and shortcomings which he dare not conceal or extenuate.

From all of which preamble it will have been inferred by the moderately sagacious reader that there is some danger of Herbert Freer falling from his high estate and proving to be scarcely that model of faithfulness he had vowed to be. For pride does, indeed, as in old times, go still before a fall. And Herbert had been so proud of his fervour and devotion, and had gone up so much like a rocket, that we need not be surprised if he presently come down like the stick of that brilliant firework.

Not that we have to relate that he fell without a struggle. Indeed, he tried hard to disregard Canon Woodstock's advice, and to be that fool he was recommended not to be. For example, no two girls could well be less alike than Ida Foster and Margaret Winter. So Herbert very soon found himself making comparisons to the disadvantage of Margaret. She played, and he thought how much more brilliant was Ida's touch! She sang, and he thought how much clearer and stronger was Ida's voice! She had little fits of timidity, too, and made little blunders; while Ida had a most supreme confidence and never made blunders at all. Certainly, prejudice itself could not but admit that Margaret had, however, a certain nameless

grace about her; and that if other people laughed at her little blunders, no one laughed so heartily as she did herself. And though Herbert, remembering to what empress he had sworn allegiance, would by no means have admitted that Margaret was beautiful, he saw that sweetness and good-temper had marked her for their own, and that the little Woodstocks hung about her in a way that was very charming, but that Ida would never have allowed. He found, too, by-and-by, that Margaret could really talk. Nay, further, that when she talked, there were actually ideas came out of her head as well as words; and that though she did not talk very fluently, and had in her speech, as in her playing, those little fits of hesitation we have recorded against her, she even went so far as sometimes to have opinions in flat contradiction to those he had himself expressed, and could tell him when she thought he was wrong, and why she thought so, without making herself in the least like a 'strongminded woman.' And in this there was really a great deal that Herbert liked; and before he left her that night he had so far overcome the prejudice with which they met as to admit she was just tolerable above the average of intolerable young ladies; and when Mr. Woodstock said at parting 'You'll come and eat your Christmas dinner with us, Herbert,' he answered, that 'he would see,' meaning that if Ida did not invite him, he really would accept the invitation now offered him. 'And as soon as you have seen, you had better write me a line to say what you see,' said the canon; 'for if you don't come I shall have your chair filled by some one else.' Then Herbert walked home, reflecting with a grim self-torture on the question whether it would be possible, in the event of Ida's rejecting him, for him to find some small teaspoonful of comfort in carrying his shattered affections to this little maid, and making her the proud possessor of what he knew he should have to describe to her as an utterly broken heart.

Between the first conception of a dark design, however, and its full

execution, there are many steps. Not even to her husband did Lady Macbeth say, bluntly, in the first instance, 'Come now, let us go and commit a murder.' And Macbeth himself would hardly have recoiled with more horror from such a naked suggestion than that which Herbert felt when he first saw that he had really contemplated it as a possibility that, under any combination of circumstances, he could marry any one but Ida: it was a deliberate suggestion, in fact, that he should commit murder on his own heart's best affections, and he felt all the moral guilt of suicide. Accordingly, when next morning he strolled down to the service in the minster, and having taken his seat in Canon Woodstock's pew, there came in by-and-by Miss Winter, he felt that he was doing quite a meritorious thing to notice how plainly she was dressed and how small she looked, and how far from distinguished; and, in short, how un-Ida-like she was in every way. But yet, as she sat beside him, and as he tried his hardest to muse on the absent face, he found with impatience that his eyes did wander from time to time to the face by his side, though he hoped it was only for the sake of freshening his mental comparisons. And as he heard her low sweet voice, so tender in its earnestness, murmuring the responses to those solemn petitions for 'all such as have erred and are deceived,' 'for all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation,' he thought how good it would be if in his tribulation a dear voice could so pray specially for him; if he himself should have erred and been deceived, how good it would be to be put right again by such an one as this. And then, as he looked on Margaret Winter kneeling there with solemn down-turned eyes and without a thought of him, 'a spring of love gushed from his heart, and he blessed her unaware.' The scales seemed to fall at once from his eyes. He said within himself (so distinctly and suddenly that he felt almost as startled as if he had said it audibly), 'Here by God's grace is the one maid for me.'

He sat out the rest of the service as in a dream; he shook hands with Margaret and parted as in a dream; he walked home as in a dream; the river flowed beneath him—it was the river of a dream; and like a dream within a dream seemed to him the memory of his thoughts when he had looked at the stars reflected in it but one short night before. It had all come on him so suddenly, that he could hardly believe he was really awake. Yet he felt that in all this dreaming there was one firm reality, that he did now love really and truly, and that this mad passion he had been so assiduously nursing and cherishing, was but the passion of an idle mind and a foolish eye. And never man felt more humiliated than he felt as he thought of his own weakness. Had he but lapsed gradually, had he fallen away by easy stages, had he had any excuse, he thought, he could have forgiven himself. But to be the slave of passion thus like a brute beast: he blushed as he thought of his own inconstancy as if all the thoughts of his heart were open and could be read by every eye that saw him. He had, it is true, had he known it, the same excuse which the blind man had for seeing, namely, that his eyes had been opened; but he himself was as angry as the blind man's neighbours, and accused himself, as if, though he did not see, he *ought to have seen*, and had merely been blind out of obstinacy.

Bad nights he had had before, but they were nights of bliss, he thought, compared with this Sunday night. Fear, and doubt, and restlessness he had had before. But to-night it was mere blind terror, and as it were a savage craving to put matters right by dashing his head against the bedpost. Whenever he sat himself down and tried to think out his problem, it presented itself inexorably in this shape—that Ida assuredly meant to accept his offer, and that however expedient he might now have found it to run off from that offer, yet his honour bound him to it, and his conscience told him he must keep his word even where it had been given so madly.

Then in the morning he came down to breakfast—weak as a child, and found for him, amongst his other letters, one which he felt instinctively was from Ida. It bore the post-mark 'TOO LATE,' and he could not help toying with the envelope, and thinking how many meanings those words had for him. The letter ought then to have come on Sunday morning. Had it done so, with how different feelings he would have opened it! But the joy it might then have brought him—and it would have been joy, though foolish joy—had come TOO LATE. He himself had come to his senses TOO LATE. He was ashamed to confess to himself what a delight it would be to him if it could only turn out that in refusing to tell him her mind a week ago, Ida herself had let slip her golden opportunity and was now TOO LATE.

Ida had thought she might venture, without appearing eager, to write and announce their return home, and she had thought it best to combine a little jocularly with business, and a little flirtation with both.

'My dear sir,' her letter ran, 'if you really were in earnest in the pretty tale you told me the other night, you will be glad to hear that we return home on Tuesday, and that *papa*, at least, will be glad to see you that evening.

'If you were *not* in earnest, then, for fear I should have been so foolish as to think you were, and should have been looking forward to seeing you again, and you should not wish to come, pray send me something to dry my eyes upon.

'Ever yours,

'20th Dec. 18—.

'IDA F.'

And she had said to herself that this was tolerably smart, and that if it did not fasten Herbert irrevocably, nothing would.

Herbert felt that there was but one answer he could return, so he wrote on a dainty little sheet of paper—

'Thank you very much for your invitation. I shall not fail to come.

'HERBERT.

'22 Dec.'

And then he bethought him of Canon Woodstock's invitation to dinner on Christmas Day, and feeling sure that on that day he would be wanted by Ida, he scrawled in pencil, in a slovenly way, on half a sheet of blotting-paper—

'Sorry I cannot come; but thank you all the same for favours intended. I hope you will not have much trouble in finding some one else to put in my chair.' HERBERT.

'22/12.'

And having addressed his envelopes and put his missives into them, he walked off himself and posted them that morning, lest, by keeping them lying all day, he should be tempted to swerve from the path of duty.

CHAPTER VI.

'SAME TO YOU, AND MANY OF THEM.'

It was about eight o'clock on Tuesday night when Herbert started off to Burton Terrace with as much exhilaration as he would have felt in setting off on a walk to be hung. He was turning into the terrace when he met Canon Woodstock, who shook hands heartily, and said, 'Delighted, my boy, to hear that you have seen your way to come and dine with us on Christmas Day.'

'But I wrote you I couldn't come,' said Herbert.

'Not if I can read English,' and he pulled out, as he spoke, Herbert's very neat little note.

'Gracious heavens!' gasped Herbert, 'what have I done?' for as he saw where his letter to Ida had gone he knew also where the half-sheet of blotting-paper had gone. 'I have crossed the letters. Oh, what a pickle!'

'A letter for you, sir: I was just taking it to your house.'

Herbert looked down, and took the letter which was offered him by Captain Foster's messenger. It ran thus:—

'SIR,—My daughter told me the nature of the declaration you amused yourself by making to her a week ago, and she showed me the note

which she sent you two days ago, and which, though perhaps more familiar than was prudent, surely contained nothing to call forth such an impertinent reply as you have thought fit to scrawl in answer to it! At any rate, I do not suppose that even you can be so vain as to imagine Miss Foster's allusion to her tears could be anything but jocular, or that there is any probability of your blotting-paper being required for the purpose you intended it; so I have the honour to return it, and to make it my special request that you will consider your acquaintance with my family at an end. And I am, &c., &c.' 'A. FOSTER.'

Herbert put this letter into Mr. Woodstock's hands, explained the matter to him briefly, and said, 'Now I must go to Captain Foster's and explain to him also.'

'You must just do nothing of the kind,' retorted the canon. 'You must thank your stars that you are well out of a mess, and come along with me. Make your apology to-morrow by letter if you are still inclined to sacrifice your happiness for the sake of your politeness.' And he dragged him away almost by main force, Herbert, it is to be confessed, offering less strenuous resistance than he ought to have done.

'What can be the matter with uncle to-night?' said Margaret to Mrs. Woodstock, after the reverend gentleman had for about the twelfth time burst out into inextinguishable guffaws at the recollection of Herbert's predicament.

But Herbert refused to have the mystery explained, and sat, himself alternately merry and angry, alternately blushing and looking pale—glad at any price to be in Margaret's presence, but thinking of the explanation that he must make on the morrow to the Fosters.

And on the morrow he really did set out to make his explanation. It was Christmas Eve, and he heard merry carols in the streets. It was Christmas Eve, and footfalls were muffled in snow, and stars shone

bright, and merry fires gleamed through the windows of every house; and as he walked up to Captain Foster's door, he saw them sitting round the fire inside—the captain, and Ida, and little Arthur, and—yes, actually—Philip Grey. He sent in his name, and had in an instant a peremptory 'Not at home,' so he walked off, thinking that if Phil could be happy with Ida so much the better; and that at any rate it would be best for him to make his explanation by letter, and that he could write his letter after Christmas Day was past—which of course he could have done. But we had better say at once that somehow he never did write it; and that to this day the Fosters believe him to have been wilfully guilty of the gross rudeness which they so naturally ascribed to him.

When he had learnt in the above way that the Fosters were *not* at home he strolled on to the Woodstocks, and was fortunate enough to find them at home. So he spent the evening with them in many a merry game. And with hearty, genial talk, and with children climbing up his knees, and with good old songs, and good old punch, and flaming snapdragons, and flaming Yule logs, and even with blushing (we had almost said flaming) Margaret (inveigled once under the mistletoe):—with all this, and with much more that good old English gentlemen love in their homes at good old Christmas time, the night wore rapidly away, and was, as all our pleasures are, alas! pronounced by all to be too short, though the longest (within five minutes) of any night in the year.

And though Herbert had accepted the invitation to dinner by mistake, he went and ate it (as the canon said when he saw the hearty way in which Herbert was enjoying himself) without any mistake at all.

But when dinner was over Herbert thought it a wise precaution, seeing that Canon Woodstock was full to explosion of the great Foster mystery, to take Margaret aside and explain it all to her first himself. And it of course could not be ex-

plained properly without Herbert's saying what was the real cause of his feeling it a relief instead of a trouble to be cashiered by Miss Foster. And Margaret did not seem nearly so surprised at the story Herbert had to tell as Herbert thought she would have been, for love is intuitive in its perceptions.

Then when they went back their host really did produce Herbert's two epistles, and Herbert (very improperly) was induced to reveal as much as was necessary to complete the correspondence; and the laughter was louder and longer than had ever before been known in that house, where merry laughs exploded every day. And when the merriment was at its height, Margaret, God bless her! with tears in her eyes crept round to the back of her uncle's chair, and whispered in his ear that the crossing of the letters had gained her, she was very sure, a good husband.

Years have gone since this Christmas time of which I write. But never Christmas time comes round without the tale of the crossed letters being told afresh, and ever with new merriment.

Margaret—the real original Margaret—is more staid and matronly than she was then.

Herbert Freer's perplexities, he says, have been all so smoothed away that he can hardly think he ever had any. May we all, storytellers and story-readers, come as happily out of ours! A smaller Margaret climbs up his knee, a smaller Herbert up hers; and smaller, smaller people still clap little hands and raise their little voices merrily when Christmas time comes round. And while their little voices blend so cheerily, and while their little hands are red with clapping, and while their little faces shine in the firelight, and all is glowing in the golden light of love, what can the writer of this story say to each and all who have followed him through it more fitting than the words which are in every mouth this happy Christmas time:—

'The same to you, and many of them.'

MY AUNT BARBARA'S MISSION TO THE EAST, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

LWOOD, by-the-way,' said my friend and old schoolfellow, Jack Lawson, as we were seated together one evening in my chambers discussing whisky-punch and cigars, 'did I ever tell you of my Aunt Barbara's visit to the East?'

'What! your aunt, Miss Barbara Tarrant?' said I.

'The same.'

'Was she ever in the East?' I inquired, with some astonishment.

'Once,' replied Jack, dryly, knocking off the ash of his cigar.

'Did she penetrate far?'

'Not very,' replied Jack, in the same tone; 'the fact is,' he continued, after a pause, 'she put her foot in it.'

'Put her foot in it?'

'As how?'

'Pon my life, old fellow,' said Jack, 'I hardly know if I ought to tell the story, as it's rather a tender subject with her; but she got sold.'

'Sold!' I exclaimed, more and more astonished. 'What! into slavery?'

'Nonsense!' said Jack, 'I didn't mean that; she got done, sir, regularly done. However, if you will promise me to say nothing about the thing, I don't mind telling you.'

Of course I gave the required promise; and Jack, after concocting a fresh brew, began in the following terms:—

'You are aware, of course, that my aunt is one of the strongminded set; goes in for the rights of women, and all that sort of bosh?'

I nodded assent.

'Well, I presume she had been reading the "Memoirs of Lady Hester Stanhope," or something of the sort; but, however that might be, the idea came into her head one fine day that, as the vacant place caused by the departure from this world of that estimable individual had never been filled up, and as none of the strongminded set had ever dreamed of continuing the "mission" of this lady in the East, she was the individual evidently designed by Providence to fill that gap. No sooner had this luminous idea entered her mind than it was acted upon. My aunt, you know, has rather a pretty little property of her own—'

'Which you hope to come in for some of these days,' said I.

'Don't interrupt me. And as she is no longer young, and being, as I before remarked, strongminded, she determined to start forthwith on her mission of civilization. As she argued to herself with perfect propriety, while turning over the pros and cons of this contemplated mission—"Where a Pfeiffer has gone I can go; what a Stanhope has done I can do;" this was an unanswerable argument. So off she went.

'I needn't bore you with the details of the journey; all travels in the East are alike. You are bitten by mosquitos; you hear jackals howling; your fresh water runs short. I ought to tell you, however, that on landing at Alexandria my aunt proceeded to Cairo, from whence, having hired a lot of servants, she directed her line of march upon Syria, where she

hoped to fall in with the ruins of Lady Hester Stanhope's habitation, in which domicile she purposed establishing herself.

'One day the caravan had halted at one of the usual resting-places, and my aunt had resigned herself to the sweets of a mid-day siesta, when she was suddenly awoken by a tremendous row among her people. "The Arabs! the Arabs are upon us!" they shouted. "We are lost!"

'My aunt has no end of pluck, as you may suppose. On hearing these cries she came forth to the door of her tent to have a look, like a strong-minded one as she was; and, amid a cloud of dust on the horizon, she could distinguish a party of armed horsemen coming down upon them at full gallop. On arriving within a short distance of the little encampment the troop slackened their speed, and one of them, who appeared to be the leader, dismounting from his horse, advanced towards the startled group. He was a magnificent specimen of a Turk was this fellow—tall, handsome, apparently about five-and-thirty years of age, and with an air of command about him that agreed remarkably well with his martial appearance. The camel-drivers were in a devil of a fright; they threw themselves on their faces, shouting out to Allah to save them.

"Get up, you fools!" said the Turk, in a loud voice, administering a slight poke with his foot to the nearest of the prostrate crew. "Conduct me to your mistress."

'My aunt came forward.

"Pearl of the West," continued the Turk, "pardon me for having caused you needless alarm. They wrote to me from Cairo that a fair and noble traveller was about to pass through our territories, and as I have always practised the seventh verse of our Koran, which enjoins the true believer to exercise the rite of hospitality towards the stranger, I have come to offer you the shelter of my humble roof. Tell me, what is your country?"

"England," replied my aunt, proudly.

"England," rejoined the Turk. "Ah, it is a beautiful country! I

paid a visit to it at the time of your Great Exhibition. How is that great pasha, Lord Palmerston? What motive, may I ask, brings you from the land of the lily to that of the palm?"

'Here was an opportunity for my aunt, and she did not neglect it. "I come," she said, with dignity, "to bring you the light of civilization."

"I am sure we are very much obliged to you," replied the Turk. "All that comes from woman is sweet and refreshing as the evening breeze. I trust, therefore, fair bird of passage, that you will honour my humble dwelling by remaining one night beneath its roof."

"My mission exacts, as a duty, that I should accept your invitation," quoth my aunt.

"In that case my slaves shall wait upon you as soon as the heat of day has given place to the coolness of the night. In the meantime I will return to my house to have all things in readiness for your reception."

'My aunt felicitated herself highly upon this fortunate rencontre in the desert which would enable her to commence operations so brilliantly. At first she thought of taking her cavalcade with her, but this idea she abandoned on reflection, as it would appear like a sign of distrust. She took leave of her caravan, then, bidding her cook to prepare the *pillau* for the following day, and to bless Providence the while, for on her return the civilization of the East would have made one great step in the right direction.

'At the appointed time the escort came for my aunt, and after about half an hour's march she was deposited at the gate of a very respectable Moorish-looking house, which was illuminated for the occasion with coloured lamps. The pasha was awaiting her arrival at the door, and very politely offered her his arm to the dining-room. When they had taken their places, Eastern fashion, on couches ranged round a table covered with fruits and flowers, my aunt asked permission of her host to address to him a few questions. Leave being granted, my

aunt opened fire something after this fashion:—

"You are, I presume, thoroughly convinced in your own mind of the truths of your religion?"

"Most indubitably, Lily of the West," replied the pasha, with the utmost courtesy. "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

"Islamism, however, you must own, has had its day. You no longer believe in its precepts; and the proof is you drink wine."

"Mahomet," replied the pasha, "whose name be thrice blessed, aware of the miseries caused by an excess in the use of the juice of the grape, has sought to preserve his followers from its fatal effects, without, at the same time, entirely proscribing a beverage which, taken in moderation, strengthens the body, enlivens the heart, and attunes it to the delightful passion of love."

"And, suiting the action to the word, the pasha tossed off a glass of champagne."

"I admit this tolerance," rejoined my aunt; "but why not extend it to women? Does not the seclusion to which you condemn them display evidences of a state of things—excuse my frankness—in the last degree barbarous? You speak of love. Now, allow me to ask, can this passion exist in a land where the dignity of my sex is so little respected?"

"What you term seclusion, O Rose of England, is for them leisure; the liberty of doing all that they desire. We cover them with a veil, it is true, when they walk abroad, but it is to preserve their complexions from the rays of a too ardent sun. The beauty of women is as the blossom of the jessamine, which the heat of day, alas! too quickly withers; it is a gift of Allah, which, like all his gifts, we are enjoined most preciously to preserve."

"My aunt was determined not to be beaten, and accordingly returned to the charge again."

"You sacrifice," she said, "all this to beauty; in your eyes the gifts and graces of the mind are counted as nought. Where, may I ask, are those arts which shed such

lustre on the female mind—music, painting, poetry, dancing? Are they, I say, even known in your serais?"

The pasha, without replying, clapped his hands, and forthwith a heavy curtain which had hitherto concealed the lower portion of the room was drawn aside, and two women clad in the Eastern costume appeared before my aunt. One of them held in her hands a guitar, the other a silken scarf. At the first chords struck by her companion the fair dancer unfurled her scarf and let it float from her personwise in the air; then she would bound forward, as if to recover the silken banner; anon she would make it describe all sorts of graceful evolutions, sometimes waving like a streamer, at others forming rainbow-like curves of the most graceful nature; again she would recover it, and cause it to twine in snaky folds around her form, all her attitudes during this performance exhibiting the very poetry of motion. The notes which meanwhile proceeded from the guitar, by turns gentle and loud, lively and sad, plainly showed that its chords were swept by a skilful hand: the melody was on a par with the dance. The pasha, carried away by his enthusiasm, clapped his hands loudly, giving utterance to certain sounds equivalent to "Bravo, Delight of the Eyes!" "Bravissimo, Torrent of the Heart!" for these, it would appear, were the names of the fair ladies in question.

To these two succeeded another pair, equally beautiful and equally accomplished. One presented my aunt with a little drawing of a rose, which she professed to have executed with her own hands; the other, being neither musician, painter, nor dancer, recited for my aunt's edification a *ghazel*, which I shall not inflict upon you, for the simple reason that I do not know what a *ghazel* is; but, according to my aunt's account, it was something prodigiously fine. In the midst of all these amusements some friends of the pasha dropped in to spend the evening with him. Coffee and pipes were served; the pasha's

ladies—rather nice girls. I should say, by all accounts—joined the party, took their share of the refreshments, and entered into conversation with the guests with the utmost unconcern. My aunt was not a little astonished at all this, and, if the truth must be told, somewhat annoyed. She sat perfectly quiet, looking at what was going on, but without uttering a word. This silence on my aunt's part was evidently respected by the pasha, out of courtesy, no doubt; but my aunt said he would give her a look now and then out of the corner of his eye, and she fancied she could occasionally perceive a slight smile partially concealed under his thick black moustachios. Depend upon it the scamp was laughing at her.

After a while the guests rose from table and adjourned to the gardens, where they amused themselves by sauntering about in groups amid the odorous shrubs and flowers. The pasha led my aunt to a kiosk surrounded by orange-trees in full blossom.

"Well, Pearl of the West," he began, "are we still insensible to the charms which elevate and adorn your sex? and do you still think us jealous?"

My aunt was rather taken aback by this, and scarcely knew what to reply; fortunately she was saved the trouble, for at that moment a tremendous row was heard in the house; armed slaves, carrying lighted torches, were seen scouring like mad through the gardens, jostling each other and shouting as if the place was on fire.

"What's the row?" exclaimed the pasha. "Halloa there, some one!"

A black slave—a remarkably fat old fellow—appeared.

"Impenetrable buckler," he began, "Well of Wisdom, Pillar of Strength—"

"Enough, enough!" shouted the pasha; "answer me directly, what means all this tumult?"

"Oh, pasha!" stammered out the fat fellow, "the slave you purchased three months ago, that cost you twenty purses, Nejema, the fair Nejema—oh!"

"What of her, is she ill—dead?"

"Oh, no, pasha; worse than that—she has run away!"

"Run away!"

"With a young Greek, and a lot of your silver spoons."

"Ha! let her be pursued," screamed the pasha in a fury, "and as for you fellows, I shall have every mother's son of you impaled if you don't produce the girl and her accomplice by to-morrow morning."

The fat negro bowed thrice, and retired, as quickly as his *embonypoint* would permit, swearing by Allah that he would execute his master's orders.

This little incident, as may be imagined, put a premature end to the evening's entertainments; and my aunt was conducted in great state to her bedroom, where a confidential slave was in waiting to attend upon her.

The fury which flashed from the eyes of the pasha, coupled with the awful threats he made use of, would have furnished my aunt with a very pretty occasion of taking her revenge on the civilization question, but the Turk hadn't given her time.

"What will become of Nejema, if they catch her?" inquired she of the old slave as she was undressing.

This old woman, who had served at Alexandria, in the families of several European merchants, replied to her in the English language.

"They will cast her into a pit full of rats," she said.

"How very shocking!" exclaimed my aunt.

"Unless, indeed, they sew her up in a sack and throw her into the sea."

"Dear, dear!" murmured my aunt.

"To-morrow," said my aunt to herself, "my vengeance will be complete. Ah! ha! Mr. Pasha, I have caught you this time in an act of the grossest barbarity. To consign a poor woman to the rats! In this single act, the man, evidently devoid of every species of civilization, displays himself. But I will prevent this abomination. My mission demands it as a duty. I now see that my presence in the East

will bear happy fruits. Yes, I will save you, O fair yet frail Nejema! while, at the same time, I shall prove to this pasha that he is nothing better than a vile barbarian."

"My aunt's first thought on awaking in the morning was to ask if they had caught the fair Nejema."

"Alas! yes," replied the old slave.

"Run at once to the pasha!" exclaimed my aunt, "there's not a moment to be lost."

The old slave started off as she was bidden, and soon returned with a message that the master of the house was ready to receive her.

During the night a total change seemed to have taken place in the appearance of her host; his dishevelled beard and rolling eyes, the paleness of his complexion, and his generally "rumpled" look, struck the heart of my aunt with dismay. To tell the truth, she began to feel her courage giving way.

This little weakness, however, lasted but for a moment; hastily invoking the aid of the goddess of her idolatry—Lady Hester Stanhope—and drawing strength from her devotion to the cause of Eastern civilization, she felt her courage revive, and she advanced towards the pasha with a firm and assured step.

"Has the night passed happily for my noble guest?" inquired the pasha, courteously.

"No," replied my aunt.

"The songs of the bulbul have perhaps disturbed her slumbers?"

"No."

"Had the Pearl of the West perchance heard the footsteps of some evil djinn?"

The Pearl of the West hadn't heard anything in the shape of a djinn.

"What, then, is the matter with the Rose of England?"

"Why, that you are a monster!" cried the Rose of England.

"I!" exclaimed the pasha, not for a moment losing his temper.

"Yes, you. I heard last night the voice of the fair Nejema crying to me to save her; you must grant me her pardon."

"Never!" exclaimed the pasha.

"You refuse my request!"

"Every woman, surprised with a *giaour*, dies the death."

"This is your final determination then?" said my aunt.

"The prophet has decreed it; the law condemns her."

"But this law which you fear not to violate for your own indulgencies, will you not violate it to show mercy and forgiveness?"

This was a home thrust for the pasha, and my aunt thought she had him, but the beggar shuffled out of it.

"No mercy!" he exclaimed, adroitly avoiding my aunt's question. "This evening she dies."

"You will dare to cast her into the pit of rats! Barbarian!" cried my aunt.

"With a cat in each sack," continued the pasha with a grin.

"Monster!"

"I don't mind throwing a snake or two into the bargain if you particularly wish it."

"Tremble, tyrant!" exclaimed my aunt, in her most melodramatic tones. "All Europe shall hear of your conduct."

"The law ordains it; but should you prefer it, I will commute her sentence into drowning; I will have them both sewn up in sacks and thrown into the sea."

The tyrant didn't care a fig for all Europe; my aunt then changed her plan of attack. "Have pity!" she cried, casting herself at the pasha's feet.

"Neither mercy nor pity! She must die; and by Allah! she shall die, and I am now, with your permission, about to give directions respecting the execution."

So saying, the pasha retired, leaving my aunt a prey to the most violent rage. She spent all the rest of the day in seeking her tyrannical host; but he was nowhere to be found. She learned, however, from the old slave, that the execution would take place at nightfall.

In the course of the afternoon my aunt received a polite note from the pasha, stating that, as he thought she might probably be desirous of witnessing an Eastern execution, he had given orders that the Greek should be impaled. "I

shall be charmed," he wrote, in conclusion, "to do anything that may be agreeable to you; I kiss your gazelle-like feet!"

'My aunt was furious; "to dare to offer her the spectacle of a man being impaled! Have I not then power," she cried, "to bend this inflexible will? to soften this tiger's heart! Holy love of civilization, can you not inspire me? I will this evening make one last effort, and if that proves unavailing, I will devote the monster to the execration of humanity."

'Towards evening, the old slave came to inform her that the pasha had just ascended the platform overlooking the sea, doubtless to enjoy the sight of the execution. Thither she ran, as fast as her legs could carry her, and grasped a firm hold of the pasha's robe. "Stop, stop!" she cried, "in the name of civilization!"

'But it would appear she was too late, for by the first glimmering of moonlight, a boat, rowed by two men, might be seen gliding stealthily out from the shadow of the land. The next instant the sound produced by the fall of a heavy substance into the water was heard, another similar sound followed, and all was still. This was too much for my aunt, she fainted right away; as for the pasha, he went off laughing.

'When my aunt came to her senses, she found herself in her own room, with the old slave standing by her side. She looked out of her window at the sea; all was calm.

'A few moments afterwards the pasha was announced. At the sight of this man my aunt could not repress a shudder: the pasha laughed.

' "Did I not play my part to admiration?" he began.

' "And you call that playing a part?" groaned my aunt.

' "Confess, now, that you found me terribly Turkish. I must have been superb when refusing to spare the life of the fair and frail Nejema, wasn't I?"

' "Poor, unhappy girl!" sighed my aunt.

' "Don't be alarmed," said the pasha, quietly; "do you know where she is now?"

' "At the bottom of the sea, I presume," replied my aunt.

' "Not a bit of it," said the pasha; "she is safe on the opposite coast."

' "But those sacks?"

' "Were full of earth; I set the pair at liberty on condition that they would return the spoons and never set foot in my territory again; not a very hard condition you must allow. Will you, then, still consign me to the execration of mankind?"

' "But why not have pardoned them openly?"

' "Because it was necessary to inspire a salutary terror in the minds of those who might be tempted to follow her example. It wouldn't do to let these young Greeks imagine that they can carry off our Circassians whenever they have a mind."

' "Shocking!" exclaimed my aunt.

' "Shocking as much as you please," said the pasha; "but Circassians are very scarce now-a-days, and cost a lot of money. You see, Pearl of the West, we have wives that deceive us, just like European ones, and we pardon them; tell me, can we possibly show a greater mark of civilization than this? Now take my advice and renounce your project of civilizing the Turks; it is an impossibility."

' "And why so, if you please?"

' "For the simple reason that there are no Turks."

' "But what are you, then?"

' "A Parisian Turk, very much at your service. My name is Oscar Coquenard; I formerly held a commission as lieutenant of Zouaves. Having retired from the French service, I came to Egypt, and entered that of the viceroy, in which I was soon promoted to a pashalik—I am now Boski Pasha—all my colleagues are English, French, Germans, and Italians. I haven't seen a Turk since I have been in the country."

'My aunt renounced the Lady Hester Stanhope idea, and the very next day started with her whole cavalcade for Alexandria, where she embarked at once for Southampton.'

'Hulloa!' exclaimed Jack, looking at his watch, 'two o'clock, by Jove! Good-night, old fellow.'—G. J. K.

TO BE LET, WITH IMMEDIATE POSSESSION.

N admiring public will naturally be anxious to know who and what I am, and I will meet the anxiety by at once confessing that my name is Smith, and that I am a bachelor. Having no matrimonial desires or intentions, it will not be necessary for me to enter into any statement such as might be called for by a commissioner in bankruptcy, or a legion of ogre-minded creditors.

For many years I have been in the habit of living alone, and I have consequently undergone the various tortures to which those who live alone are subjected; I mean, in the way of lodgings. And when my last landlady died, as she did very hurriedly, and without giving me the slightest notice, I thought I would try the experiment of keep-

ing house myself. I weighed the matter over very carefully in my own mind, that place where everybody is supposed to keep a nicely-adjusted balance and correct weights, and resolved that I would without further delay take a house—a small one—just large enough for myself, and which I would constitute my castle, according to the approved notions of Britons, who object to being slaves upon philharmonic principles.

Now I have no long tale in store, of how I was bothered by furniture-dealers, and ironmongers, and carpet-men, and upholsterers, and all the locusts that cover the superficial area of an empty house, because I was fortunate enough to see an advertisement of a neat villa residence, only recently furnished. The tenant was, 'for satisfactory reasons,' about to go abroad, and he wished to meet with an eligible successor, willing to take the furniture at a valuation. I wrote to P. Q., that being the designation given in the advertisement, and upon being politely requested to call at No. 14, Finch Villas, Wobbler Road, I did call. I looked over the establishment, and felt it my duty as a tenant in prospective to grumble a little, and to keep up a constant fire of objections of all sorts directed against the house, the situation, the furniture—in short, against everything. Being opposed by P. Q., and Mrs. P. Q., and by an elderly lady, whom, I concluded, from what I have read of the species in novels, to be the mother of Mrs. P. Q., I was fairly beaten out of my stronghold, and forced into the possession of that of P. Q. The valuation was duly made by a gentleman, who, I was informed, was an entire stranger to the lessor. If I happened some time afterwards to see the lessor and the valuer in convivial companionship, I suppose I must date the intimacy as *subsequent* to my interview with P. Q. It is immaterial to what I have to say to notice how much the valuation amounted to; I paid it, as per agreement; and when the time came for me to take possession, I jumped into a cab, and drove straight from my lodgings to 'my new house.'

Going into one's own house for the first time in one's life, generally happens under peculiar circumstances, and is, directly or indirectly, associated with bride-cake and wedding-favours. There is a sort of glow in the sensations we experience upon entering our home—the home that is to be shared with the

which a bachelor cannot, of course, attempt to realize. There is an obliviousness to wall-papers; and damp mortar, broken window-cords, and insecure chimneys will not dawn upon returning consciousness until the new house has become no longer new. With me the impressions of new-born tenancy were rather prosaic than otherwise; and I felt no enthusiasm worth speaking of, even when I arrived at the grand climacteric of putting my toes on my own fender in front of my own fire. I was sufficiently gratified to know that I was in a house without unnecessary bother in getting there—that it was a nice-looking house and comfortable, and possessed of all those modern appliances without which no builder ventures to approach a mortgagee; moreover, it was cheap. I am speaking of first impressions; and, perhaps, if I were not an unreasonable sort of being, my first impressions might have lasted long enough for me to get used to them; but I am not a reasonable being, and my impressions underwent a change.

I do not know why villas should be built with thin partition walls, for it is certainly no advantage to the tenants. My next-door neighbour, on the north side, was a gentleman who had some official employment, and a very large family. I lived near to him sufficiently long to know that the population tables are subject to rapid alterations. His good lady, as he termed the partner of his bosom, had made him happy a short time before I went to reside at Finch Villas, as the little stranger painfully assured me through the wall at all hours of the night. Its official papa was kind enough to allude to the circumstance one morning as we went down the road together. 'It was,' as he said, 'getting on, and would soon cease being so troublesome; it was its teeth.' But it did get on, and made life hideous in spite of its teeth. And when I fondly hoped it was arriving at months of discretion, a strange commotion and excitement, and a hurrying to and fro of frowzy old women,

servants, and doctors, warned me that the prerogative to squeal was about to be claimed by another pledge of affection.

On the other side lived a couple of ladies—will they forgive me if I say that they were not young? I did not think it possible that I could ever destroy the *entente cordiale* which I believed existed between us. Unluckily I one night—it was in the depth of winter—had a fire lighted in the grate in my bedroom. It would not burn as it ought to have done, and required constant stirring and poking up. The next morning, a rather stiffish note informed me that I was to be indicted as a nuisance; that I had thumped away at my bedroom wall all night long; that they were sure I was carrying on coining, or some other equally dreadful pursuit; and that I should be handed over to the police. Upon the principle which leads to the multiplication of disasters, the same day my dog Snap, a bull-terrier, discovered that my fair neighbours possessed a small Italian greyhound, and Snap very nearly made a dinner of it. Then their pet canary got loose, and flying off the window-sill, fell into my water-butt, and was drowned. Several other little disagreeables occurred to mar our neighbourship, until all the residents on the south side of number fourteen became impressed with the one steadfast idea that I was a brute, and a disgrace to Wobbler Road.

Somebody circulated a report that I was a Mormon: it originated with the greengrocer's shop, I think, and arose through my having expressed a desire to pay for my supplies as they were ordered, in preference to having them 'booked.'

These were annoyances of which I was the cause, but there were others of which I was the victim. Wobbler Road had houses on both sides, and at a house precisely opposite to mine, lived a gentleman who was in the habit of frequently publicly expressing an opinion that he would not go home till morning. I grieve to say that he was not at all times competent to decide the matutinal problem as to when 'daylight doth

appear.' Whether this was his reason for arousing the neighbourhood, in order that he might be assisted to a solution, I do not know; but I do know that I was invariably made aware of his intention not to go home until the daylight did appear. The brilliant idea occurred to me to charter the policeman of the beat to quiet the gentleman, and to hurry him up to his house and indoors with all despatch, on such nights as the morning declarations were stronger than usual. This ingenious but expensive course answered very well until it happened one night that a new policeman had been put on duty. I have reason to remember that night, having been suffering from an excruciating attack of *tio-doloureux*. At about two A.M., I distinguished through the broken chorus of 'Dixie' the arrival of my bacchanalian friend. I rolled the bed-clothes round my head to shut out the noise, but could still distinctly hear him wish he 'was in Dixie;' a wish I was not slow to echo. The din gradually bore down Wobbler Road, and at last anchored under my window. A ran-tan at the door—my door! What is he knocking there for? I thought to myself. Knock, knock! A knock that I am sure would have wakened Duncan, had that ill-used monarch lain where I did. I waited a little, until the knocking recommenced to the tune of 'In the Strand.' In an agony of pain from my face, I threw up the window, and demanded to know the cause of the disturbance.

'Hallo, old cock! letsh in, will you?'

'Go away, do, you are at the wrong door;' and I banged the window down.

After the lapse of a few minutes the knocking continued, having veered round to the popular melody

'I'm a young man from the country.
But you don't get over me!'

I opened the window, and called out to the self-confessed 'young man' to go away, or I would call the police.

'Call the pleesh,' said he, 'come, thatsh a good un! Call the pleesh

when a chap wants to ger into hish own housh!'

'This is not your house,' I said; 'your house is opposite.'

'O, my housh is op-(hic)-opposite, is it; where old Snap-dragon and the bull-terrier live?' and he struck up in a hoarse brandy-cracked voice

'You don't get over me!'

To be called out of my warm bed at that unseemly hour, and to be addressed to my face as old Snap-dragon, was not calculated to soothe my feelings, so I shouted police! as lustily as I could; and after some time, and a considerable amount of knocking and melody on the part of the gentleman below, the policeman arrived, to whom I briefly explained the circumstance, and then jumped into bed.

An animated discussion now ensued. The inebriated serenader informed the policeman in a strictly confidential tone of voice that he lived on the right-hand side of Wobbler Road, exactly opposite to the lamp.

'Left-hand side, you mean,' said the policeman.

'No, right-hand shide.'

'You must be wrong.'

'No, I tell you, Bobby—I beg pardon—I should say offisher, itsh the right-hand shide; right-hand shide, exactly op-opposite to the lampsh.'

And so the policeman, apparently convinced, as an 'officer,' that my torturer was right, and very probably imputing malicious motives to me for keeping the gentleman out, made another vigorous onslaught on the knocker.

While listening to the conversation, the truth began to dawn upon my mind that my musical friend was right in a degree, for he had been in the constant habit of coming up Wobbler Road from the north end, whereas he had, in this exceptional instance, come in at the south end, so that what was at other times the right-hand side of the road, happened, on this particular occasion, to be the left. The lamp was, it was true, opposite to both houses. In this view of the ques-

tion I again parleyed with the besiegers, and had the satisfaction to see my friend hauled off by the policeman, though very much against his will, and amid many threats of an investigation at Scotland Yard. The banging of a door, and the faint echo of 'Good night, Bobby!' convinced me that silence might again reign supreme.

Being of a quiet turn of mind, it was sufficiently evident that I had made a wrong choice in selecting Finch Villas as a residence; and therefore, after having been the tenant of number fourteen a little over fourteen months, I advertised the house 'To be let, with immediate possession.'

THE PERI OF THE PAVILION.

A Romaunt of 1863.

FYTTE YE FIRST.

NAPOLEON the First made a droll observation,
'The English are only a shopkeeping nation.'

And between me and you
The great man of St. Cloud

In stating the fact, clearly proved that he knew
Of us and our habits a slight thing or two;
For he meant to assert (what is perfectly true),
That whate'er be the object we chance to pursue,

When we buy or we sell,
Build a church or hotel;
When we speak, read, or write,
Make a treaty or fight,
Dine, breakfast, or sup,
Go to bed or get up,
Insure a friend's life,
Choose a horse or a wife—

In whatever we say, or whatever we do,
We always take care to keep *business* in view.
As an instance which fully bears out what I say,
When after ten months of hard work and no play,
Summer brings the vacation holiday,
We buy knapsacks and gaiters, pack up, go away,
And prepare for three weeks or a month to be gay;
But we even do *this* in a business-like way.

So like my countrymen did I,
One Monday morning last July,
Lay briefs and law-books all aside,
Calmly to study 'Bradshaw's Guide:'

A work which is (as Pope observes of man),
'A mighty maze, but not without a plan.'

The thing I chiefly wished to know,
Was where on earth I ought to go;
For I had previously been through
All places that the tourists 'do.'
With Oxford friends (a college league), I
Had watched the sun rise on the Righi;
Had sipped the best of German wine,
At Oberwessel on the Rhine;
Had heard the echoes on Killarney,
Had kissed the far-famed stone of Blarney;

Y^e First
Napoleon.
Hys exceed-
ing great
sagacitie.

Y^e English
of y^e period;
their cha-
racter,

Y^e poet pre-
pareth to
take hys
pleasaunce
abroad.

He bethynk-
eth him of
hys former
travels.

How he had
roamed
through
divers far
countries.

Had stood on Snowden's summit drear,
 And smoked my pipe on Windermere;
 At Harrowgate, and Kissengen,
 Drank sulphuretted hydrogen.
 Explored the Seine, Garonne, and Loire,
 In Homburgh played at rouge et noir;
 Admired Old Scotia's mountain torrents,
 And seen the Niobe at Florence.
 So you may guess I was perplexed,
 As to what spot I'd visit next;
 When as I thought the matter o'er, my eye just chanced to
 light on
 This sentence in the Bradshaw, ~~and~~ 'Cheap Excursion Trains to
 Brighton!'
 I suddenly started right up off my chair;
 'Ha! Brighton! How comes it I never was *there*,
 The journey's not long, ten shillings the fare;
 If I find the place slow,
 I can easily go,
 And to Cheltenham, Buxton, or Dover repair,
 Biarritz where the Empress each day takes the air,
 Aix la Chapelle, or Boulogne sur Mer.'
 Having made up my mind, in my chambers I stayed,
 Till I called in my laundress, a virtuous maid,
 Who the last fifty years has followed the trade
 Of washing the barristers' shirts; and mislaid
 Very often my spoons, nay cribbed I'm afraid
 My tea (but I now get my groceries weigh'd).
 This aged domestic her wages I paid,
 Then my way to the London Bridge terminus made,
 The by-laws 'gainst smoking contrived to evade;
 And lighting my meerschaum, was safely conveyed
 To the end of my journey; then leisurely strayed
 Through the town to the beach, and my figure displayed
 Mid the loungers who thronged the Esplanade.

He wisteth
 not what to
 do.

Finally
 decideth.

Summoneth
 y^e ancient
 priestess of
 y^e Temple,
 and payeth
 her.

Circum-
 venteth the
 railway
 company,
 and jour-
 neyeth unto
 Brighton.

HERE ENDETH FYTTE Y^e FIRST.

FYTTE Y^e SECOND.

About five o'clock that day I saw a stream of people flowing
 All in one way, and wondered much to what place they were
 going;
 I met and asked a 'horsey' man, half jockey half postilion;
 And he answered, 'To a band as plays to-day at the Pavilion.'
 So off to the band I determined to go,
 As perhaps I'd see somebody whom I might know.
 The gardens were so crowded, that scarcely could I move,
 And through a sea of crinoline to make way vainly strove,
 While the band of the 16th Slashers, were playing 'The Power
 of Love.'
 Two hours went by, I prepared to depart
 And was steering out—when I got a start
 That sent the blood in a rush from my heart
 To my head, which at once commenced to swim;
 My hair stood on end, and my eyes grew dim;
 Then I grew so pale my own friends wouldn't know me,
 Or (if from Virgil you'll allow me to quote),
 'Obstupui steteruntque comæ
 Vox fancibus hæsit,' the words stuck in my throat.

He wendeth
 his way
 unto y^e
 Pavilion.

On the whole I felt uncommonly queer,
And the why and the wherefore you'll presently hear.

A woman passed beside me,
She touched me with her dress;
And never yet did poet dream
By forest oak or mountain stream
Of greater loveliness.
As the neck of Annie Laurie
Hers was 'like the swan,' and on it,
A flood of golden glory
Streamed from underneath her bonnet.

by reason of
an angel
who appear-
eth unto
him,

Now I'm sure you'll agree
In saying with me,
It's very few *angels* we anywhere see,
In this year eighteen hundred and sixty-three;
I suppose the proportion is one to the million,
But I looked on that *one* in the Brighton Pavilion:
And not being accustomed to beings celestial
It's not odd that I, a poor mortal terrestrial,
At the heavenly sight
Should be dumbfounded quite.

and is ex-
ceeding fair
to look
upon.

And howe'er you may sneer, I fancy you might,
Had *you* seen her just been in the very same plight.
She leaned upon the arm of one who seemed long past his prime,
His hair was gray, and his face was tanned as if by an Indian
clime,

She hath a
companion.

Quite 'A fine old English gentleman one of the olden time.'
As soon as I came to myself again
I endeavoured to keep them in sight but in vain;
We got into a crush at the entrance door
And somehow or other I saw them no more!
Then I turned my weary feet
To my hotel to dine,
But oh! I could not eat
Nor at all enjoy my wine.

I sipped my claret and ate a peach,
Then wandered (like Alp) 'along the beech';
Dundrearies were there by the score, and each
Wore whiskers that down to their shoulders did reach;
(You may see their portraits in 'Punch' by Leech.)

Backwards and forwards I paced on the strand,
While the waves rippled lazily up on the sand;
Sometimes I'd walk, and sometimes I'd stand,
And each girl that passed me on either hand,
(Especially the *fair* ones), I eagerly scanned,
And all the old men whose faces were tanned;
But I ne'er saw the angel I had met at the band.

So with anxious heart and aching head,
I regained the hotel and went to bed.
But all that horrible night I declare,
I dreamt of nothing but golden hair;
Wigs made of it seemed to lie on the chair,
On the floor, on the table, in short everywhere.
Methought I went up in a balloon,
With Glaisher, on purpose to visit the moon;
But discovered upon arriving there
'Twas one globular mass of golden hair;
Sailed off to Australia, but to my despair
Was drowned in an ocean of golden hair;

Night com-
eth on, and
strange
dreams
anent
golden hair
visit y^e
poet.

Took a ticket for London, but when asked for the fare,
 Found nought in my pocket but golden hair;
 Was tried for attempting to stab the Lord Mayor,
 And hanged with a rope of golden hair!
 Then all the women golden-haired of whom
 I had ever read in poets or romancers,
 Came trooping in, and when they'd filled the room,
 First had a waltz, and then commenced the Lancers;
 From Spartan Helen, long since gone to Hades,
 Whom the smooth-tongued Trojan from her home decoyed,
 Down to those extremely interesting ladies—
 My Lady Audley and Aurora Floyd.
 Though I cannot describe it in stanzas so fine,
 Tennyson's '*Dream of Fair Women*' was nothing to mine.

But at last it was o'er,
 Nothing troubled me more,
 Till I heard at the door,

Some one call out 'Please, sir, the hot water—it's nine.'

He deter-
 mineth to
 see the
 damsel
 again,
 and to
 follow her
 with the
 strategie of
 Childe
 Hawkshaw.

I got up, had my breakfast, and puzzled my brain
 How I might see the golden-haired beauty again,
 For I swore to see her whate'er might betide;
 Woo her, and win her, and make her my bride.
 My resolute purpose fate shouldn't balk. Pshaw!
 I'd follow her like detective Hawkshaw,
 Whom (when after a thief) no dangers could quail, or
 Successfully baffle, for when once on the trail, or
 Having got the least clue,
 His man he'd pursue,
 And the cleverest burglar hand o'er to the gaoler:
 See '*The Ticket of Leave Man*,' a play by Tom Taylor.
 Having come to this determination,
 On the Esplanade I took my station;
 When as sure as a gun,
 About half-past one,

Espyeth her
 y^e next day
 on the
 Esplanade.

Both father and daughter I happened to meet,
 As on one of the benches they were taking a seat;
 That bench for an hour or more I stood nigh,
 And once or twice fancied *I'd caught her eye*.
 When they stood up to go,
 I watched them, and lo!

She drop-
 peth her
 kerchief,

Imagine my feelings of joy, to find
 Her handkerchief, she had left behind.
 Hurrah! I had triumphed, 'twould afford a pretence
 For speaking to them without giving offence.

which he
 picketh up,

I snatched up the treasure, upon it was seen
 Most carefully worked in the corner '*L. GREEN*.'
 So Green was her surname, but what did '*L.*' mean?

Did it stand for Letty, Lotty, Linda, Lucy, or Louisa,
 Lavinia, Leonora, Laura, Lillian, or Lisa?

But no time in conjecture was to be spent

So after them both I immediately went;

and giveth
 unto the
 old man.

At length I o'ertook them, and thinking it rather
 The best course to take, I spoke first to the *father*.
 'Your daughter's, I think, sir.' With a manner polite

Dolorous
 and tragical
 discoverie.

He looked at it first, then said, 'Thanks, it's all right;
 But you never made a greater mistake in your life,
 Than to call her my *daughter*. Why, sir, she's my *WIFE*.'

FYTTE YE THIRD AND LAST.

Vanish'd the dream! dissolved the spell!
I paid my bill at the hotel:
With tottering step and aching heart
Prepared from Brighton to depart;
 Caught the 3·30 train,
And weighed down with my weight of woe,
In that sad journey did not know
Whether the train went fast or slow;
Whether I was by myself or no,
 A mist hung o'er my brain,
As prostrate by the cruel blow
 I came to town again.
That was the middle of the year,
And now the bleak December's here
 With winter's frost and rain.
Yet time has not my grief removed,
True to her memory I have proved;
I only feel that I have loved,
 Have loved, but loved in vain!
And knowing this can ne'er be gay,
Or as the laureate might say:
I rave not madly at my lot,
Nor curse her husband, let him go
Henceforth in peace; I only know
That I am here, and she is not!
And brooding on that truth forlorn,
Keep vigil through the dreary night,
Till out of darkness glimmers light,
The cold gray dawn of early morn.
That cherub face, that golden hair,
I seem to see them everywhere;
For her phantom it haunts me wherever I go,
Like ' the raven ' of Edgar Allen Poe.

Y^e poet
much dis-
traught,

returneth
unto y^e
great citie.

Hys present
pitiful con-
dition.

And that phantom ne'er receding, while I'm sleeping, waking,
feeding,
Thinking, smoking, talking, reading, peereth at me from the
door;
E'en as madly now I write on, hoping thus my grief to lighten,
Stands that weird-like one of Brighton, like Pepper's ghost upon
the floor,
And in low sepulchral accents, saith that female on the floor
Thou shalt see me nevermore! ;

Y^e END.

H. M.



UP IN THE CLOUDS.

A TALE IN NINE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER VI.

FOLLOWING up the hint which Miss Lestroppe had dropped in the morning, I had snugly secreted myself at the bottom of the car, and was covered with cloaks and sundry articles, when I felt the tug and the snap of the rope which immediately preceded the balloon's escape. After that, I perceived no further shock or violence. I supposed that the balloon was freed from its moorings, and held down by men's hands, until my fellow-travellers should take their places in the car. But the music of the band suddenly died away, like the swell of an organ abruptly closed by the player. I heard a loud and confused murmur of voices rapidly hushed to a complete silence, which I fancied to be the breathlessness of expectation. But the silence soon became so absolute, and was moreover so long continued, that it alarmed me. Even at an execution, the stillness pervading the crowd at the last fearful moment would be briefer and less impressive.

I therefore cautiously peeped out from my concealment. Still the silence of death. The air struck sharp and chilly on my flushed cheeks and my heated frame. From the hollow of the car, wherein I lay crouching, nothing around me was any longer to be seen. The houses and the lofty trees which encircled the gardens were gone. The neighbouring steeple of St. Peter's Church, which I had beheld crowned with eager spectators, had utterly disappeared. I sat up; I rose; I stood in the car. I knelt, and ventured to look over the edge. I was an atom suspended in open space. I was a single living creature dangling on high in the midst of measureless solitude. Beneath me lay the city of Z——, with its cathedral, its churches, its streets, and its suburbs—a toy model of a town, such as we see exhibited in museums.

The fields were brightly-coloured patches dispersed over a wide-spreading velvet carpet; the woods and plantations, tufts and strips of verdant moss; the roads, lines of yellow thread; the river, a winding streak of blue floss silk. I could see all those things as distinctly as if I had been looking at them through a clear double-concave or diminishing glass. There was a brilliancy about their minuteness which reminded me of gazing at the shells and seaweeds at the bottom of an excessively transparent pool left in the rocks by the retiring tide. The truth flashed upon me at once. The balloon had prematurely taken its flight, and had carried me away with it.

I dared to look again; the earth was now sinking rapidly, plunging deep into some fathomless abyss. In its descent it dragged the very firmament after it; the sky was fast falling down upon me, and became blacker and blacker as it approached me. I alone was motionless, fast fixed by a mighty spell to one unvarying point, while a cataract of clouds, a sea of vapour, poured down upon me in a colossal stream such as no fevered imagination ever dreamt of. The mighty misty torrent, however, was not inexhaustible or endless. I was enveloped in the current of downward drifting mist, when it suddenly stopped. Beneath me lay a cloudy ocean, still sinking. The earth had altogether disappeared. The sun shone brightly. Far overhead was a wide-spread flock of fleecy white clouds, apparently descending also, but much less rapidly than the others had done. And I was alone, beholding these things companionless! The whole awful panorama was so unlike terrestrial landscapes, that I had a difficulty in realizing it to my own mind as an actuality. I felt tempted to throw myself from

the car, as I would out of bed, to insure the waking from a dreadful nightmare.

But the idea of a nightmare was soon discarded. In our wildest dreams, the mind is mostly conscious of an internal monitor who tells us, 'This trouble will soon be over; fear it not seriously; don't take it too much in earnest; it is but a vision of the night.' Or, 'Enjoy that lovely landscape; listen to those enchanting strains; prolong your pleasure as much as you can. Do not awake until you are obliged to. You may have seen those scenes, you may have heard that melody before, in dreams, but never in your waking life. Revel, then, in the paradise of dreamland; it is a brief enjoyment which will soon pass away.'

In this case, there was no possibility of self-deception. Here was the reality, hard, rigid, and material. The wicker framework of the car which I grasped in my hand, the silken mass of the balloon enclosed in its stout network, the rays of the sun which comforted me by their warmth, my clothes, and the sundry articles amidst which I was nestled, imperiously impressed me with the reality of my strange situation. Even the clouds beneath me reared themselves upon their floating foundations in such well-defined masses as to preclude all notion of their belonging to the world of phantoms. They formed alpine peaks and mountain buttresses. They imitated icebergs, avalanches, glaciers, and piles of rocks, and beds of snow stretching out for many a league. The sun gilded their eminences and the projecting portions of their surface, while the hollows and recesses were marked by deep shade. The shadow of the balloon passing over them as they swept along gave the same apparent solidity to their forms as when we behold the shadow of a cloud coursing along the face of a cliff or sweeping up a mountain side. So heavy and substantial were they, that I could easily conceive a planet, a globe, composed of nothing but congregated clouds, and needing no firmer nucleus

within to entitle it to a place in the solar system.

Instead of lapsing into dreaminess, my mind was more alert than usual to note and observe all around me. In travelling, when we come upon some object renowned for its singularity or its grandeur, and on which we can only cast a hasty glance and then immediately continue our route—such as a mighty cascade, a deep and labyrinthine cavern, a narrow mountain pass, or a bird's-eye view of a country afforded by an elevated shelf of table-land; or when, in life, our destiny sets us face to face with some imposing or tragic event—a shipwreck, a fatal accident, a battle, a volcanic eruption, the deathbed of a beloved friend—we strain our faculties to drink in and photograph on our memory every detail of the picture. Just so was I wide awake to the fact of my being borne, in the flesh, far into the upper regions of the atmosphere, and vividly conscious that it was a position to be remembered hereafter. I felt anxiety and awe, but no paralyzing terror. An encouraging presentiment of deliverance, somehow, kept me from falling into despair.

'By some means, quite unknown, I must,' I thought, 'surely meet with a rescue. It is a long lane which has no turning. My fortunes, apparently now at the worst, must improve.' A good hope shining in the human breast is often the cause of the fulfilment of that hope. No immediate danger threatened. I could not believe that I was to die in this way—to perish slowly of cold and hunger, or to be suddenly extinguished, crushed by the fall to a shapeless mass of flesh and bones. Still such a death was possible. Icarus might be a fable; Pilatre de Rosier was an historical fact whose heart throbbed as violently as mine does now, not so very many years ago. 'What a death was his! Perhaps a suicide? May I be spared such a death, if only for my poor mother's sake! yes; I will try hard to live, and to reach the blessed earth again in safety.'

Where was I? Over what part of England was I hovering now? What had I beneath me; land or

sea, city or forest, mountain or marsh? Impossible to guess. The earth was submerged in a deluge of clouds. At present, therefore, all thought of descending must be relinquished. In my unpractised hands, the mere attempt might expose my life to great risk. I knew, indeed, that a certain rope was connected with the valve which allowed the gas to escape; but I had no experience of its action. By opening the valve too wide or keeping it open too long, I might easily so disturb the equilibrium of buoyancy as to precipitate the whole machine, a collapsed and falling wreck, to the ground. No; I must keep up for the present. I must do nothing, but endeavour to remain where I was, at least until the earth became visible.

I looked amongst the various things that lay around me in profusion in the car. One of them was a pocket compass. I had remarked, as a curious circumstance, that the sun appeared to revolve slowly round the balloon. A very little consideration enabled me to explain it, by supposing the balloon itself to be slowly revolving on its own axis. The compass confirmed me in this idea. While the sun apparently was going round the balloon, the compass steadily pointed to the west and with equal steadiness to the sun, which was gradually sinking towards the horizon. The anchor and its rope for mooring the balloon on its descent to the ground, had not been put into the car; but there were two bottles of wine, a silver cup, a corkscrew, a thermometer, bread and biscuits, cold meat, a knife, and other utensils and instruments. Of the solid objects, including the bottles, I took especial note, destining them, in my own mind, to be thrown out as ballast, in case the balloon lost its floating power too rapidly and threatened to drop me either into broad waters or upon the dangerous roofs of a town. At either end of the oval car, two baskets, with flat tops, which also served as seats, I knew to be heavily filled with ballast. Upon inspecting them, instead of the usual bags of sand, I found them filled with

bladders of some heavy liquid. If with water, what a resource! To be assured of the reality of this invaluable well in the midst of the desert, I untied the neck of a bladder, and tasted. Water it was. Thanks! thanks to Providence! There is one more glimpse of hope.

The light flescy clouds never reached me. I wished they had, they looked so beautiful. They were an archipelago of snowy islets floating in a black-blue sea. While gazing upwards at them, a new sensation came over me—a peculiar sickness and faintness. There was a singing in my ears, and I gasped for breath. My fingers were swollen and blue, and a numbness, proceeding from them and from my feet, was gradually creeping over me. Unseen hands, whose thrusts I was unable to resist, planted icy daggers in every part of my frame. The very sun, now sinking fast towards the western horizon, instead of imparting any vital warmth, seemed himself to be sucking out the little vitality that was left in me. I felt no more. A leaden torpor paralyzed my senses. I became unconscious.

Had I died in that condition, I should have suffered what is called an easy death. I was awakened, first, by tingling pains, and then by a general sensation of soreness, as if I had been severely beaten. My brain felt as if some one had recently given me a violent blow on the head. I was oppressed by qualms, seasickness, headache, and thirst, which latter painful sensation I endeavoured to allay by profuse and improvident draughts of water from my store. I was also shivering with cold. On looking around, the sun was still low above the horizon; but on consulting the compass, he was in the east. If the compass spoke the truth, it must now be morning, and I must have passed the night in a swoon and its subsequent insensibility. A few minutes' observation confirmed the fact; the sun was evidently rising. His rays soon warmed me. I breathed more freely, I felt more at ease, and something within me told me that my elevation above the earth was less than it had been.

It suggested the hope that, by a gradual leakage of gas from the balloon, it might finally perhaps be gently deposited on the ground. It was a reason the more for patient endurance. Still, nothing was visible beneath me but a confused abyss of rolling vapours. Around, were floating masses of clouds protean in shape, for their outlines varied as the sun continued to rise. Sometimes they resembled a series of many-domed mosques built on a broad foundation; further off was an unbroken range, stretching out leagues and leagues in length, which resembled a whole alpine chain slowly moving along in space. Here and there mimic icebergs floated in the transparent air, until, under the sun's bright rays; they gradually faded into nothing.

While gazing down upon the misty sea, watching if it would not part to allow me a glimpse of terra firma, a vulgar and daily want made itself felt; I was conscious of the pangs of hunger. I again investigated my stores, and thankfully made a hearty meal off meat (of which there was plenty) and bread, (of which there was but little), and emptied another bladder, which afforded a delicious draught of water. All the empty bladders I distended with air and returned them to their place in the baskets. My stock of fluid was getting low, and yet I had need of a liberal supply. The dryness of the atmosphere had rapidly robbed me of every drop of moisture I had imbibed.

The repast ended, I looked out again. The sun had risen higher, and either his rays had gained greater strength, or I had sunk into a warmer stratum of air. I was almost hot; and soon the mists below me melted as if by enchantment. Some few of them formed themselves into masses which sailed away grandly overhead. Curiously enough, one cloud came forward from among the rest, as if deputed by them to welcome my entrance into their domain. This cloud attended me all day long; if it left the balloon for a while, it returned soon afterwards, until I began to feel a friendship for it, although not

quite so strong in intensity as Ixion's passion for his misty love. But the great body of vapour disappeared, as if dissolved in the tepid atmosphere, and unveiling a glorious sight beneath me—the verdant earth, beautifully striped with patches of green of various shades, and traversed by a mighty river whose course ran from east to west.

Yesterday's illusion was again repeated; it seemed as if the balloon and myself were motionless, occupying a fixed point in space, while every other object was in motion; only, this time, instead of sinking, terrestrial objects seemed to be coming to meet me. Things scarcely visible on the western horizon slid forwards, passed beneath me, and then disappeared beyond the eastern boundary of view. I interpreted the truth to be that the balloon was steadily travelling onwards in a direction from east to west.

In this way, we—the balloon and myself, attended by our pilot cloud—followed pretty nearly the course of the river. The air was particularly clear, and I was able to distinguish bridges across it and tributary streams running into it. Here and there were small towns on its banks, each with its steeple pointed upwards at me. The uprising of the mist likewise permitted not only sights but sounds to reach me. When the sun, according to the compass, was in the south, I distinctly heard the tinkling of bells wafted to me from various quarters and with different degrees of faintness. It was the sounding of noon in a Catholic country. The changed aspect of everything, the brighter effusion of light than I had ever seen before, the altered look of the earth's surface, told me at once that I was hovering over a foreign land.

But my gaze was earnestly directed westwards, to spy out what was coming next, when I beheld what could be no other than a vast outstretched mass of buildings, a city considerably larger than Z——, backed by a forest of masts and rigging; and, beyond all, a long streak of purplish blue ominously straight and horizontal. The city glided forward to meet me. As it

neared,] bands of music, peals of bells, and salutes of cannon were audible. About half a mile to the south of the city, overlooking the sea, and crowning an eminence on a lofty cliff, stood a small white church, towards which a gaudy procession was streaming. But the colours blue and white were so predominant, both in the assemblage of banners and the clothes of the crowd, as to give to the whole a dull azure tint. Blue, I knew, was the Virgin's colour; they were celebrating, therefore, some festival in honour of the Virgin. The shipping were decorated with flags and pennons. Meanwhile, the dark purple stripe beyond the city neared, and widened, and showed itself unmistakably the ocean, opening its portals to welcome me, or rather its jaws to swallow me up. Had these devotees and pilgrims noticed the balloon? Had they any suspicion of my presence in the car, and of my fearful strait? I had no flag or other signal, so I made an attempt with a handkerchief which Miss Lestroppe had given me only two days ago, and which she herself had hemmed and marked with my initials. It was a large square of blue silk divided into four compartments by a cross of white, which was formed by two broad stripes running across it each way. Each blue compartment was studded with large white stars. I displayed it, holding it with outstretched arms from the edge of the car, as an insane appeal for help! But help! What help could reach me there? It was an imaginary straw of salvage clutched at by a drowning wretch. Had any one there a telescope or a spyglass at hand? For in a couple of minutes I beheld a movement in the crowd; it became more dense and sank down, as if kneeling or prostrate. After an interval—it seemed a long one—a confused murmur, as of shouts, reached me, with more clashing of bells, rolling of drums, braying of brass instruments, and firing of guns. Soon, all was melting away in the distance. No help was possible, even if they thought I wanted help; but not a few probably believed in a miracle,

others that some bold adventurer had improvised an aerial banner, to heighten the splendour of the fête by a striking and unexpected incident. I was now hanging over the ocean, with the continent of Europe fast retiring towards the east. I looked for my attendant friendly cloud. It had followed me no further than the church-crowned cliff, over which it still remained suspended, refusing to quit the shore, and leaving me to my impending fate.

Land was soon out of sight. Beneath me lay an enormous disk of waters, bounded by a hard, sharp, circumferential line. It might have been the earth in its infant state, before dry land had yet appeared. A few sailing-vessels—white specks sparsely scattered over its surface—were all that served to indicate motion. They showed that I was ever drifting westwards, a new Columbus in a frailer bark. From the same quarter the sun stared at me, low, swollen, angry, red. He would soon set; and I expected to have to watch his limb dipping behind the convexity of the sea, when there uprose stealthily a black and distant bank of cloud in whose bosom his light was extinguished. His last rays, glancing obliquely over the waves, seemed to show the sea as looking nearer. Was I imperceptibly subsiding, to meet an inevitable watery grave?

I had taken nothing all day long. In the morning I had been pinched by hunger; I now felt only unquenchable thirst. I emptied a bladder, and found it was the last. Depression for the first time seized me. I bade farewell to home, picturing my parents' grief and uncertainty. Emma Hugginson! A forward fool! Ah, Miss Lestroppe! you little dream of my hopeless condition! Ah, Adelaide Niedermeyer! could I but behold your quiet and intelligent face once more! But all—all are lost to me now, whether dearest friends or indifferent acquaintances!

It was nearly dark. With no further means of slaking thirst, I gave way to a current of despairing thought. If starvation must come

at last, what mattered it whether it reached me a day or two sooner or later? A lengthening of life would be only a lengthening of misery. Sudden death by drowning even is better than the prolonged torments of death by famine. The compass still says that I am hurrying westward; for the black cloud to the west is rushing hitherwards. Back to your place again, compass of evil augury! What's this packed beside it? A corkscrew! Of wine, sparingly tasted at home, I have here a whole bottle all to myself. A bumper, then! Capital wine! Another cupful! When criminals are left for execution, I have heard, they may have whatever they choose to call for. I call for another cup of wine—*Nunc est bibendum!*—and for another—and another!

A feverish sleep closed this solitary orgie. I dreamt that I was compelled to walk along a rope stretched from the top of Z—Cathedral to the car of the captive balloon, in which Miss Lestroppe was waiting to receive me with open arms. I saw my parents in the crowd, but they did not seem to be aware of my perilous task. Emma Hugginson was there, making bows and scoffing grimaces at me. Some winged creature beside me supported me by the hand; its face was the face of Adelaide Niedermeyer. It conducted me safely along the rope, and gave me a kiss on the cheek as I fell into the car.

I awoke with a start, to find myself still really lying in the car. The kiss on the cheek was repeated. A warm breath surrounded me, and I heard what sounded like a sigh. Again that kiss!—a big drop of rain-water! Again the warm breath!—the westerly wind tempered by the Gulf Stream! its sighs, tidings whispered to the balloon that it was driving us back to land again! The day was breaking in the east. I caught the blessed rain-drops in the macintosh sheet, and swallowed them greedily and gratefully. Daylight! Land! Hope! Joy unutterable! Another draught of water, with breaking of bread and meat, accompanied by thanksgiving, to sustain exhausted strength, and

prepare for the next turn of the wheel of fortune.

Ever eastward, now, with black warm clouds and drenching showers, above, beneath, around. Sometimes, when enveloped in a cloud, it was so dark that the balloon could not be seen from the car. But I had been swept back to the continent; and lo! my friendly body-guard, the cloud, once more resumed his attendance. As an assurance of my return to land, mountain-range after mountain-range, seen only at intervals, came from the east to welcome me, and then vanished. They even then called me, when I could not see them. A peal of thunder rolled; and then they tossed the sound from one to the other, like Titans playing at catchball with the elements. The forests below growled indistinctly; there was a rushing sound of many waters; there was a great storm, on the surface of which I was swimming, all that day and all that night.

With the next day's dawn came a chilly blast, mingled with fast-falling flakes of snow. The whirlwind and the tempest were over, and the steady wind was carrying me rapidly over the plain, leaving behind me gigantic mountains to the north. The balloon was drifting low through the murky twilight, almost threatening to graze the highest tree-tops. Icicles and snow hung to the cordage, all of which was sodden with rain. On, and on, till a silver line on the horizon which advanced towards me, and was marked south by the compass, disclosed my advance to the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean Sea did come. I was hanging over it, but followed the skirts of a picturesque and lovely coast. I was so low in the air that I could see the great aloes growing on the shore, and the olive-trees studded over the slopes, and the white waves breaking against the rocks. I could make out the rigging of the vessels that were plying at no great distance from the shore. My resolution was taken. Now, or never; neck or nothing. The sun will soon rise, I thought; will dry the cordage,

rarify the gas, and cause the balloon to mount again. I shall be carried out to the open sea; or, crossing it, to the wilds of Africa. Better to risk here a chance of escape with life, than to incur torture and mutilation at the hands of savage Arabs, or fall into the clutches of cannibal negroes.

One, yes, just one cup of wine before the final plunge can do no harm. I took off my shoes and other heavy clothing, leaving them at the bottom of the car, and retaining only my blue-striped cotton shirt, my blue cloth trousers, and my blue worsted socks. The money in my netted purse (one shilling and sixpence only, a schoolboy's treasure) was so trifling in weight as not to need discarding: I strung the empty full-blown bladders to my handkerchief, which I then tied round me beneath my arms and encircling my chest. I looked down again at the sea, and tried to persuade myself that it lay not very far below. I knelt in the car and said a short heartfelt prayer. And then instantly, fearing that a moment's delay might bring with it doubt and hesitation, I climbed over the car and hung by my hands to its outside edge, with my feet crossed together as they dangled in the air. Once more I thought of home and the possibility of revisiting it, to steel my nerves. I drew one deep inspiration. I closed my eyes, and let go. The car slipped instantly from my hold, and was gone. Of it, or of the balloon, I never saw anything more.

CHAPTER VII.

The instant that my hands loosened their grasp of the edge of the car, I instinctively clapped them to my face, covering with one my mouth and nostrils, and with the other my eyes and forehead. There was a rushing in my ears, and a few seconds' suspense, which doubtless appeared to my overstrained faculties double or triple its real length. Then came, not, as I feared, a stunning blow, but a deep plunge, as of an arrow shot into the depths of the sea. The sudden immersion

was a shock to my frame from its coolness rather than its resistance. I held in my breath manfully, remembering what divers after pearls are capable of doing. The waters of the Mediterranean are denser, and therefore more buoyant than those of the ocean. The deep inspiration I had taken, aided by my apparatus of bladders filled with air, soon brought me to the surface, where I lay panting and struggling like a wounded dolphin.

The shore was not far distant—some half-mile at the very outside—and I was endeavouring to reach it by swimming, when I noticed that a small vessel was tacking about and making for me. It was one of the coasters which ply with merchandise between the Italian and the African ports, and had evidently witnessed my fall in the sea, and the subsequent ascent of the balloon with its empty car. As she steered round me cautiously, I could read on her stern her name 'LA MADONNA DEL MONTE. — SPEZIA.' The crew pointed me out to each other, gesticulating violently; and, as they found I wore a human semblance, the boldest of them lowered their boat and rowed to the spot where I lay floating. Even then they hesitated. One of them, however, exclaimed, 'Che bello giovane! What a handsome youth! By Bacchus, we must not leave him here to drown;' and stretched out his hand, which I forthwith seized. In a few minutes afterwards, we were all on board the vessel together.

The whole crew now crowded round me with very various expressions of countenance. Some offered me spirits from a flask, which I refused, to their surprise and disgust; others made continual signs of the cross, muttering exorcisms and invocations of saints. They were unanimous, however, in stripping me, which I did not resist, being glad of the dry clothes—a gay cotton cap, a shirt and trousers—which one of them brought. The purse and its contents were examined.

'He is English!' shouted one, showing the shilling.

'Then he is a heretic,' growled another.

'No,' said the one who had pulled me out of the water, and who seemed to be the master or the captain. 'Ecco! Look here!' Detaching the bladders from the handkerchief, he spread it out, displaying the white cross and stars on their blue ground. 'He has made some vow to the Virgin. He wears the Virgin's colours, and is no heretic. We will keep him and take care of him.'

At this, there was a general outburst of displeasure, the burden of which, as far as I could catch, was, 'He has been chased out from heaven; he cannot be good for us! Impio! Maladetto! Eretico! Throw him back into the sea whence you took him.'

In the midst of the hubbub, to which I listened passively, a bright thought seemed to strike my protector. 'At least, let us take all this,' he said, pointing to what had been stripped from me, 'as an offering to our good patroness—to our Lady of the Mountain, yonder.'

'Alla chiesa della Madonna del Monte? Ebbene! Very well. Vedremo; we shall see. We will go to the Church of the Madonna del Monte; but we will not sail again with this little diabolical outcast on board, unless he confess, and receive absolution; unless he prove a true believer, and make his peace with the Virgin and the saints.'

The self-willed crew, seizing all my spoils, including even the empty bladders, pushed me into the boat, leaped in themselves, the captain following, and we were soon on shore.

We landed on a rude little quay, from which, by a broad, straight, dusty street, we reached a public square, or piazza, with a fountain in the middle, where I took a deep and refreshing draught. My spirits rose almost to feverish excitement. There was combined in me a realization of safety, a sense of escape, a consciousness of relief, a load off my mind, an overflow of delight and thankfulness. I was again treading the solid earth, although

with naked feet. As to the crew who had picked me up, they might abuse, ill-treat, and reject me; but they would hardly, now, either murder me, or make me suffer the fate of Jonas.

It was a lovely morning at the close of an Italian summer, such as Englishmen, who have not seen, cannot imagine. Every object bore a rich and golden look. It was market-day, and the country people were arriving in picturesque groups, with their fruit, their fowl, their curious baskets, and a hundred things that were new to me. There were heaps of flowers, tomatoes, grapes, cayenne pepper pods, gourds and vegetable marrows, figs green and violet, strewed around. On the tops of the houses there were large open gables constructed to catch the passing breeze, while many of the colonnades were hung with curtains to keep out the rays of the sun. I was gazing around, forgetting the difficulties of my position in its utter novelty, when the captain motioned me to move on.

We left the square, and were soon out of the town, following an arcade which led up a hill. On reaching an open platform, the arcade ceased. Seats were there for the repose of pilgrims, of which we all profited. Never had I beheld such a charming view, both for richness and variety. In one direction we looked down into a deep valley surrounded by lofty mountains. In another, the whole country was nothing but a garden on the hill-sides which rose from the sea. The ground was covered with aloes, myrtles, orange-trees, and all sorts of beautiful plants. In front of a cottage close by was trained a lemon-tree in full bearing. In short, no description can convey the combination of blue sea with purple mountain broken up into vineyards and olive groves.

We started again, and reached the church by a winding path with an easy slope. At the very door of the edifice my ordeal began; the sailors watched me narrowly. They crossed themselves with holy water. Did I? No; their suspicions were correct. They pushed me roughly

before them into the church, until we reached a chapel or shrine whence daylight was almost excluded, but which was brilliant with the flames of numerous tiny candles. As the sailors knelt before this shrine, bowing low, I could distinguish in it a black female figure crowned with gold and hung about with jewellery. It was a hideous doll, a frightful idol. Around the shrine were hung all sorts of trophies, votive offerings, silver hearts, crutches, models of ships, and pictures. To this heterogeneous collection I was made to add, suspending them with my own proper hands, the clothes, the purse, and the handkerchief — everything of mine which the sailors had brought. That done, they waited, expecting me to kneel and tender my special thanks to Our Lady of the Mountain. Having been taught from my childhood that it was both foolish and simple to worship graven images, I firmly refused, walking away from the altar, and shortly afterwards slipped out of the church.

The captain followed me in silence, as likewise did his boat's crew. They were no longer turbulent; but they were decided. Their consciences were satisfied, their angry passions calmed. They at least had paid their devotions; if I had not paid mine, so much the worse for me. I was unfit to sail in the same ship with them. The captain understood it at a glance, and that no remedy lay in his power. As we slowly descended the Mount of the Virgin, he kindly took my hand, and said, 'I can do no more for you; here we must part. Where you came from, I know not; but I have brought you on shore. May God and the Virgin watch over you!'

When we reached the square, the sailors just gave me one unfriendly parting stare, and then hurried away to the quay as if I had been an unclean thing. The captain bought at a baker's shop a little white loaf, which he put into my hand together with a small silver coin; and then uttering the words 'Addio, mio figlio! Adieu, my son!' and motioning me to remain where I was, he disappeared in the

same direction with the rest. A few minutes afterwards, I beheld the boat put off from the quay and reach the vessel which had rescued me, and which immediately resumed her course. I was left alone, without resource, in the market-place of a small unknown Italian town.

Never having been accustomed to walk unshod, the soles of my feet began to gall me. I drew near to the fountain, and after bathing them in the outrunning stream of water, was quietly beginning to eat my loaf. An old fruit-woman, sitting close by, looked up at my careworn face with an air of pity. In spite of my light clothing the air was oppressive. I was fully exposed to the sun, while she was shaded by a vast umbrella which fulfilled the office of a tent. She gave me a handful of ripe figs to season my bread, 'per carità, out of charity,' as she said, and beckoned to me to repose on a bundle of straw beneath the shade of her canopy. I accepted her hospitality, and, worn out with fatigue both of mind and body, fell asleep with a portmanteau-shaped pumpkin for my pillow.

After an interval of welcome slumber, I was lazily unclosing my eyes, when I beheld in front of me, seated on a basket, a handsome and intelligent-looking man of five-and-twenty, wearing what in England would have passed for a working stonemason's dress. His attention was completely occupied by a small sketch-book which he held in his hand, and in which he seemed to be writing or drawing. I was raising myself upon one elbow, when he gently interposed, saying, 'Pray do not stir. Remain as you are one little moment longer and permit me to finish my study of your feet.'

'As you please,' I replied, scarcely comprehending what he meant. 'I will not stir; I am at your service.'

'A stranger!' he exclaimed; 'and in this dress!' Although I could read Italian with ease, my spoken Italian wanted oiling sadly and betrayed my foreign origin. He continued his work, carefully. At last, showing me his sketch, he said, 'Grazie! Thanks! What

do you think of it? I could model a couple of feet from this. But tell me, my lad, what have you got to do?"

'Nothing.'

'Have you any means of procuring food and lodging?'

I showed him the remains of my little loaf and the silver coin the captain had given me. 'That is all I have.'

'Just heaven! Where do your parents live?'

'In England.'

'And how did you get here?'

'I fell in the sea, and was picked up by sailors who have left me to shift for myself on shore.'

'And what do you mean to do?'

I shook my head sorrowfully, and made no reply.

'My first idea, then, is a fortunate one,' he said. 'I am a sculptor, not very rich, as you may see; still I am richer than you seem to be at present. You have only your good looks; but they have their value. Your friend, the fruit-woman, with whom I am acquainted, pointed you out to me as you lay asleep. I am busy about a statue of young St. John the Baptist, which is delayed for want of a youthful model. Now the model I am in search of would have to help me in other things, and if clever, he might become my apprentice. In that, you can do as you please. What say you to coming with me? It will be better than having to pass the night beneath the church portico and to beg for food to-morrow morning.'

The old fruit-woman complacently nodded assent.

I reflected for an instant, and it seemed a lucky chance. 'I accept your offer thankfully,' I replied; 'but I should wish to communicate with my friends as soon as possible.'

'Do so at once. A few yards off sits a public writer, who will act as your secretary.'

We proceeded to a table, before which was seated, in the open air, a keen-eyed old man, whose profession was to write from the dictation of the peasantry who required his services. Whatever their business or their secret, they whispered it or

told it aloud, and he put it into writing for them. Births and deaths, hopes and fears, losses and gains, sales and purchases, were left to his discretion to announce in befitting style. Needless to say that a public scribe knowing everybody's interests and intentions, is often resorted to by the Italian police as a source of information.

At our approach, the writer dipped his pen in the leaden inkstand, smoothed his paper, and made room for me, on the bench beside him, to pour my tale into his expectant ear. The usual group of gossipers and listeners, with lazy curiosity, were lingering around.

'I will write myself,' I said, taking the pen. 'In the first place, where am I?' I inquired of my new patron, the sculptor.

'You are at Massa, duchy of Modena; but, as you are not going to remain here, you had better date your letter from Carrara, and request an answer to be sent to Guiseppe Ciampolini's studio.'

I wrote according to his suggestion.

'He can write! Sangue di Dio! He can write!' exclaimed the loungers in astonishment, justly regarding my cotton cap and coarse shirt and trousers incompatible with such an accomplishment. 'But his fingers are not the fingers of a sailor-boy! Who is he? What is he? What has he written?' they asked of the presiding scribe, who shook his head mysteriously, and very reluctantly replied, 'I do not know.'

'The writer does not know what he has written!' Popular feeling might perhaps have turned against me; but as soon as I had folded my letter, directed and sealed it with a wafer, Guiseppe, paying the scribe his due, led me away to the post-office, which was situated on the opposite side of the square. As I slipped my letter into the box, he looked at it with a sceptical glance as if to say, 'It is all very well to post it; but you will not find the posting it of much use.'

'Let us now enter this trattoria,' he said. 'A plate of minestra and a beaker of wine will do you good. We will then depart. But I must

first supply you with shoes and stockings, for I see that you are already footsore.'

CHAPTER VIII.

'Sir George Niedermeyer was sitting in the business-room of his official residence at Modena, a little before the hour when the general public were admitted. His daughter Adelaide, arrived from England the day before, had followed him, claiming the privilege of an only child who had a great deal to say after a long separation. She had just been relating to him the accident that had happened to the balloon at Z——.

'It is a horrible circumstance,' he said, 'and if you had not assured me of the facts, I should have believed it an invention. It is very natural, my dear, that you should feel interested in the poor boy's fate; but the most wretched part of the story is, that with the best will in the world, nobody can do anything to assist or save him.'

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of an usher, who announced a prelate attached to the person of the Cardinal Archbishop of Modena. The prelate entered accordingly. When he had taken his seat, after fulfilling the somewhat lengthy forms of Italian ecclesiastical politeness, he said, 'I have just returned, Sir George, from a visitation tour along the sea-coast; and his Eminence has likewise showed me a singular letter just received from Rome. It requires that, if we hear of any person who has recently *fallen from the sky*, we are to treat him kindly and take the utmost care both of his soul's and his body's health. We do not quite understand its meaning, but it comes from a quarter which we are bound to respect and obey. We might have considered the expressions it employs as merely metaphorical; but near Massa I was shown, at one of the shrines of the Holy Virgin, ex voto offerings—a purse, clothes, and other things—said to have been placed there by a lad who was vomited into the sea by a flying

dragon, which instantly mounted in the air and was lost to sight. The miracle was witnessed by the crew of a vessel bound from Spezia to Tunis, who picked up the young man and landed him safely; but he has since quite disappeared. I come to you to help us to a clue; because the money in the purse is English, and the wearing apparel is also of English manufacture.'

'Excuse me, monsignore,' said Adelaide, timidly. 'Is the purse made of blue silk, netted?'

'It is,' replied the prelate, surprised. 'And what, signorina, do you guess the rest of the clothing to be?'

'Black cravat, white waistcoat, leather shoes.'

'There are neither shoes, waistcoat, nor cravat.'

'Blue striped shirt and blue cloth trousers?'

'Yes.'

'Hundreds of lads,' Sir George interposed, 'wear blue striped shirts and blue cloth trousers.'

'Is there a blue silk handkerchief, with a white cross and white stars?' asked Adelaide, eagerly.

'There is.'

'Then it belongs to a person who may have fallen from the sky. We ought to set off, papa, for Massa.'

'Of what use would that be, child—to find the clothes and not their owner?'

'Mr. Bumshus Bussell desires to see you, Sir George,' said the door-keeper, entering.

'Very well. Show him in. Monsignore, I beg you will not disturb yourself.'

'How do you do, Sir George?' said the vivacious intruder. 'I must trouble you once more in my usual hurry. I want to be off immediately for Milan, and my passport must have your *visé*. Thank you much! While you are doing it I'll look at this "Times," which is new to me. Anything fresh in politics? No. There's never any lack of advertisements; and disconsolate fathers and mothers and distressed lovers must put considerable sums in the "Times'" pocket. Here's this advertisement again:—"To D. C. of Z.—Return to your anxious

parents or write," et cætera. By-the-way, I have just come from Carrara, and guess I have seen one of these interesting runaways. I wanted to select a chimneypiece, and was shown an unfinished statue of St. John the Baptist, which I think of purchasing by-and-by, if I can get it a bargain. The sculptor would present to me his pupil and model, an English lad, who is sitting for it—a well-made fellow, certainly, but the biggest liar in all the peninsula. He told me he had fallen into the sea; which I didn't believe. It was only a blind. When I pressed him about dates he quite broke down; for he must have come all the way from England in about the same time as a carrier pigeon would take to perform the journey. So I gave him a little good advice to the effect that truth went furthest; after which he declined to tell me the name of the vessel from which he fell in the sea. The statue, however, will be charming. Here is a study drawn from the head.'

'Very clever indeed. Look, Adelaide.'

'It is Donald Cartwright himself!' exclaimed Adelaide, who had not lost a word of the gentleman's speech.

'Cartwright! He told me his name was Cartwright, and that his father was Mayor of Z——. But you know he might have found that out from an almanack, and so assumed a respectable alias. I am very glad he is not an impostor; my statue will be all the more valuable. Good day, Sir George. Can I do anything for you in Milan?'

'Signor Giacomo Consalvi,' said the usher at the door, introducing a fresh visitor as soon as the other had turned his back.

'The head of the Modenese police,' the diplomatist whispered to his daughter.

'Can I say just one little word in confidence in your private ear?' the new-comer blandly inquired.

'Certainly you can,' was the courteous reply. 'Your Excellency will take the trouble to step with me and look at some new pelargoniums which my daughter has brought

from England, and which we are nursing in this bow-window.'

'Can you tell me anything,' he asked, in the lowest possible tone of voice, 'of a British subject (as we suppose) who signs himself Donald Cartwright?'

'I don't know. Perhaps I can. Why do you ask?'

'You are behind the scenes, and therefore I may tell you that we have lately stopped a letter with that signature because it contains ambiguous expressions. Read it. The duke does not wish his duchy to be a hiding-place for political exiles, nor for doubtful characters. All artists, you know, are more or less liberal; but the sculptor with whom this person is harbouring we know to hold very advanced opinions indeed.'

The English Minister read as follows:—

'MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER, —I escaped from almost a hopeless position by throwing myself into the sea. I found at last in the Mediterranean the only possible means of rescue. I am now here, or close by, safe and sound, and await your directions how to proceed, trusting that your anxiety on my account will not have been of long duration. I have found a refuge with an Italian artist, to whom you will be kind enough to address, as under, directions for the steps you wish me next to take. Believe me, my dear father and mother, to remain, in sorrow and in great haste,

'Your affectionate son,

'DONALD CARTWRIGHT.

'Carrara, Duchy of Modena.

'With Giuseppe Ciampolini, Sculptor.'

'Then his friends know nothing of this?' Sir George observed. 'I think you had better send it on.'

'We should have forwarded it in any case, in order to stop the reply to it. But if you answer for the party we shall pay no more attention to the correspondence. You are aware, Sir George, that I only execute the orders given from a higher quarter. The duke is very anxious to keep away all suspicious strangers.'

'Adelaide, my dear, come and read this. A wonderful surprise awaits you. Can you guarantee to Signor Consalvi the respectability of the writer?'

'It is he! He is safe! We have found him at last,' exclaimed the delighted girl. 'Assuredly he belongs to an honourable family, who will joyfully welcome him back again. Poor Mrs. Cartwright! She is still, then, in uncertainty respecting her son's fate. I will write to Miss Crittenden, by this afternoon's courier, to break the happy news to her.'

'Do so: I think you may safely do it. Signor Consalvi, the person about whom you inquire is [not, I think, a *mauvais sujet*—not an object of suspicion for the ducal government. Monsignore, I thank you much for your visit. Be pleased to tell his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop that we believe the party after whom he inquires to be at this moment at Carrara, and that, as soon as the heat of the day is over, my daughter and myself will start in search of him.

CHAPTER IX.

My life at Carrara was an easy one; although sitting to the sculptor partly wrapped in haircloth drapery, maintaining the same attitude and the same expression of countenance, proved more irksome than I had expected. Still I did my best; at first through gratitude, afterwards from an awakening love of art. My other labours in the studio were light, and my leisure moments pure enjoyment. The mountain air, the glorious climate, the fruits and flowers in rich profusion, afforded increasing and innocent pleasure. My mind was comparatively tranquil. I had written home, and awaited an early and affectionate reply.

But day after day came and went, and with it came no reply. A letter, I knew, from England, required a certain time to arrive; still I began to feel the effects of hope deferred. Physical causes also had their influence. However well I had borne

up under the fatigue, now that the excitement of danger was over exhaustion naturally followed. Guiseppe saw that I was ailing, and made me refrain from every task. He procured me meat, good wine, and choice fruit, notwithstanding all which kindness I fell seriously ill. Fever confined me to my bed. The doctor came, and wanted to bleed me after the fashion of his countrymen, which Guiseppe steadily refused, and thereby, I believe, saved my life. But I kept no more count of the lapse of time; delirium and weakness had interrupted my reckoning.

Slowly recovering, I was sitting at an open window which looked out on the mountains whence the famous marble is drawn, when Guiseppe announced 'English friends!' They were Sir George Niedermeyer and his daughter. To shorten my story, they remained at Carrara a couple of days, to allow me to gain further strength, and then they took me with them, by easy stages, to Modena. Three weeks afterwards they told me to prepare to receive the visit of other friends who would shortly arrive. In an hour or two I was in my mother's arms, while my father stood by shedding tears of joy. They had been accompanied to Italy by Captain and Mrs. Fitzjames, who, to avoid agitating me too much, did not make their appearance till the following day.

I was speedily restored to health and strength. We were in no hurry to leave the charmed peninsula, and found much to do there. Mrs. Fitzjames performed a pilgrimage barefoot from Carrara to the church of La Madonna del Monte, and redeemed my spoils by more brilliant offerings of very considerable value. My parents and myself visited my friend Guiseppe, and sent off for England, by way of Leghorn, half the contents of his studio. Our whole party met at Carrara before our final departure for home. On looking round at my severely rationalistic mother, my good Church-of-England father, the sceptical yet not irreverent sculptor, and the devout Catholic Mrs. Fitzjames—all met to rejoice over the finding a

poor lost sheep, I could not help exclaiming mentally,

'One touch of love makes all the world akin.'

The newspapers never mentioned my adventure, because it underwent the process of hushing-up. There had been no injury to life or limb; the lost balloon was duly paid for; I had travelled, and had returned in company with my parents; and nobody had a right to make unfavourable comments. The Hugginsons had no reason to be proud of Emma's conduct, nor had Griffiths to boast of his. Captain and Mrs. Fitzjames after their marriage did not want their names unnecessarily brought before the public; and so the escape of the balloon shared the fate of other nine days' wonders.

Finally, I did not marry Emma Hugginson. Whom I did marry (after a long probation) you may perhaps guess. I don't think that we either of us have ever repented of taking that step. We pay an annual visit to Lord and Lady Erin, where I have the pleasure of beholding my youthful features immortalized in Carrara marble. Griffiths will probably die in his bed, for he has given up ballooning, and acts as professor of gymnastics to the little Fitzjameses, of whom there are seven. The countess is still a good Catholic, and a strict observer of ecclesiastical discipline; but at fish-day dinners the butler whispers in my ear, 'Sir, there's a fine leg of mutton on the sideboard.'

THE GREAT CHRISTMAS CATTLE MARKET.

PERHAPS the most wonderful manifestation of *animal excitement* ever seen in England was at Smithfield Cattle Market on one of the great days. Smithfield is a very dull, dismal, dismantled place now, waiting for the time when the Underground Railway and the Dead Meat Market will occupy part of its area, and put a little more money in circulation in the neighbourhood; but until nine years ago the Cattle Market at that spot was one of the sights of London. Within an area of little over six acres, business was transacted which ought to have been accommodated with twice or thrice the space—irrespective of the road traffic which crossed it in various directions. 'Into this narrow area,' as a 'Quarterly' reviewer said shortly before the change of system, 'surrounded with slaughter-houses, triperies, bone-boiling houses, gut-scraperies, &c., the mutton chops, scrags, saddles, legs, sirloins, and rounds which grace the smiling boards of our noble imperial capital throughout the year, have, for the major part, been goaded and contused for the benefit of the civic corporation installed in Guildhall.' It was *always* dirty and wild with confusion on market-days; and on Bartholomew Fair days the scene was perhaps such as had no parallel in any other country—a mass of filth into which pleasure-seekers forced their way, uncertain whether an overdriven ox would gore them before they could reach Richardson's or Wombwell's show, or the learned pig, or the fat boy. Even when the fair was abolished, there was one day in the year on which Smithfield was under high pressure of a very extraordinary kind. This was always on the Monday nearest to, or shortly before, the middle of December, when most of the bullocks and sheep intended for Christmas Day in the metropolis were sold to the butchers. To accommodate the seething, living mass in Smithfield itself was simply an impossibility. Long Lane, St. John Street, West Street, King Street, Hosier

Lane, Cock Lane, Giltspur Street, Duke Street—all were filled with the overflowings from the central area. 'If a stranger can make his way through the crowd, and by means of any vantage-ground or doorstep can manage to raise himself a few feet above the general level, he sees before him, in one direction, by the dim, red light of hundreds of torches, a writhing, parti-coloured mass, surmounted by twisting horns; some in rows, tied to rails which run along the whole length of the open space; some gathered together in one struggling knot. In another quarter, the moving torches reveal to him, now and then, through the misty light, a couple of acres of living wool, or roods of pig-skins. If he ventures into their closely-wedged and labouring mass, he is enabled to watch more narrowly the reason of the universal ferment among the beasts. The drover with his goad is forcing the cattle into the smallest possible compass; and a little further on, half a dozen men are making desperate efforts to drag refractory oxen up to the rails with ropes. In the scuffle which ensues, the slipping of the ropes often snaps the fingers of the persons who are conducting the operation; and there is scarcely a drover who has not had some of his digits broken. The sheep, squeezed into hurdles like figs into a drum, lie down upon each other, 'and make no sign;' the pigs, on the other hand, cry out before they are hurt. This scene, which has more the appearance of a hideous nightmare than a weekly exhibition in a civilized country, is accompanied by the barking of dogs, the bellowing of cattle, the roaring of men, and the dull blows of sticks—a *charivari* of sounds that must be heard to be appreciated.'

The year 1854 witnessed the close of that wild scene. During no less than *seven hundred years* the chief cattle-market for the metropolis had been held in Smithfield. For aught we can tell to the contrary, the 'beeves' and 'muttons' 'veals' and

'porks,' which loaded the tables of our early Norman kings, and supplied the well-filled larders of many a monastery and priory, were bought in this place; and there is no record of the market ever having been interrupted. As the corporation of the City of London derived revenues from the market, every project for reform suggested during the last hundred years of its existence was met by obstinate antagonism. When hard-pressed, they enlarged the area of the market a little, to afford room for a few more beasts; but to remove the market to a better spot they did not, and would not, until frightened by a threat that the Government would establish a metropolitan cattle market, in which the City should have no concern at all. Then it was, and only then, that they built a new market at Pentonville. The City had been wont to charge a shilling for the use of a permanent pen on market-days, tenpence for a hurdle pen, a penny for a 'tye' of beasts or calves, twopence for a score of sheep, fourpence for a score of pigs, twentypence for a score of cattle, and so on; that is, a charge for the space occupied, and a further charge for the number of animals sent. There was no certainty that these tolls and dues would pay the interest on the cost of a new market, therefore the Corporation hung back; but, as we have said, the voice of the public became too strong to be resisted—a new site was purchased, and a new market built. The last 'great day' at Smithfield was on the 11th of December, 1854, when thirty thousand of the finest animals in the world were jammed into this small space. The live-stock had been pouring in ever since ten o'clock on the preceding evening (Sunday), and had become one dense mass of animalism by daylight—brown-coated Devons in one place, bulky Herefords in another, short-horns in a third, Scotch cattle in a fourth, Welsh in a fifth, foreign cattle in a sixth, sheep here, calves there, pigs in another spot; and all the poor animals so placed that access to a drink of water was nearly an impossibility. It was not the last market-day, but

the last 'great' day, the last December market for the supply of two or three million Londoners with their Christmas dinners. The last, really and positively the last cattle market at Smithfield, was held on the 11th of June, 1855; and the graziers and salesmen, bankers and clerks, drovers and butchers, made their arrangements to commence business at the new spot four days afterwards—on the 15th. The Act for the construction of the New Cattle Market was passed in 1851; but as the Corporation went to work unwillingly, it took four years to complete all the arrangements. They bought seventy-five acres of land at Pentonville, on and near the spot where the famous suburban tea-gardens known as Copenhagen House once stood; it cost 60,000*l.* They appropriated fifteen acres for a market, fifteen for cattle-lairs and slaughter-houses, and kept the rest in reserve. When the late estimable Prince Consort opened the new market, two days before the commencement of business, he said: 'A certain dislocation of habits and interests must inevitably attend the removal of the great City market from the site it has occupied for so many centuries; and this may possibly retard, for the moment, the full development of the undertaking; but any opposition arising from such causes will soon cease; and the farmers will, doubtless, soon learn to appreciate the boon thus conferred upon them by the London Corporation, in the increased facility afforded to them for the transaction of their business, and the comparative security with which they will be enabled to bring up and display their valuable stock in the great Metropolitan Cattle Market.'

The market is certainly well planned, and kept admirably clean, except during the actual market-hours. Speaking generally, we may say that it is an irregular quadrangle, with a clock-tower in the centre, and four taverns at the four corners, with broad avenues crossing each other at the clock-tower; and the open area set off into divisions for the different kinds of live-stock. Not less than 400,000*l.* have been

spent upon the land and buildings; and when we see how favourably the spot is situated in reference to the railways on the north side of the Thames, we cannot but think that the money has been well laid out: although the Corporation complain a little of the financial result. A West-end butcher, driving up in his cart to the nearest entrance in York Road (known to our fathers and grandfathers as Maiden Lane), first comes to the hostelry known as the 'Black Bull;' if from the City, he comes to the 'White Horse;' if from the north-east, the 'Lamb;' if the north-west, the 'Lion.' These houses were built by, and belong to, the Corporation; they are leased by publicans, and transact their chief business on the two market-days in each week. The open space of the market will accommodate at one time about 7,000 cattle and 42,000 sheep, with a proportionate number of calves and pigs, in a degree of comfort which the poor animals could never obtain at Smithfield. The calf and pig-markets are covered, the roofs being supported by iron columns, which act at the same time as water-drains. In the centre of the whole area is a twelve-sided structure, called 'Bank Buildings,' surmounted by one of the most elegant campaniles, or bell-towers, constructed in recent times in this country. The twelve sides give entrance to twelve sets of offices occupied by bankers, salesmen, railway companies, and electric telegraph companies. No building or open space in England, perhaps, is better drained than the market. The whole of the clay underneath, to a depth of several feet, was first burned to the state of red brick; then drains were formed in every direction; then granite paving was laid down; then hollow pillars were set up to sustain the roofs, pens, &c., and to carry rain-water down into the drains; and, lastly, an abundant supply of water was distributed to stand-pipes, all over the market. The horizontal bars of the pens are formed of Kyanized timber; and every precaution seems to have been taken that the work, well suited to its purpose, shall be durable for ages. The

southern portion of the area, not occupied as a market, is appropriated as lairs and abattoirs—that is, lairs or sheds where the live-stock can rest in peace if they arrive some time before market hours; and abattoirs where they can be slaughtered after being sold to the butchers. Two massive buildings on the north side of the area look very desolate; they were intended as hotels; but no one needs them for hotel purposes, and no one will rent them. The late Mr. Bunning, the architect to whose skill we are indebted for the market, introduced these buildings as part of his plan; and we ought not, perhaps, to blame him that they have been found to be superfluous. When the unfortunate *Orphéonists* visited London from France, a few years ago, they were bedded for a night or two in those buildings, owing to gross negligence on the part of those who ought to have catered for them; and the unfitness of the locality was most wretchedly apparent.

Any Monday or Thursday (the old Friday's market was changed to Thursday in 1858) we may see at the New Cattle Market, on an average scale, that which is to be seen on a grander scale at the great day just before Christmas. The finest bullocks and sheep that the world ever saw begin to come into the open area at three o'clock in the morning, bellowing and 'baa'-ing to a degree not very pleasant to the inhabitants of Camden Villas, hard by; and they are coming in all the forenoon; for until the market closes, at two in the afternoon, the clerk of the market is always ready to allot 'pens' and 'tyes' for any new-comers that may arrive. If we could trace the routes by which all these animals have reached Pentonville, we should be struck with the wonderful activity shown in supplying the metropolis with butchers' meat. Time was when the bullocks and sheep, calves and pigs, wended their weary way along the turnpike-roads, arriving at Smithfield in an exhausted state, which boded ill for the quality of the meat afterwards derivable from them. But now a wonderful change

is visible. Eight distinct lines of railway bring live-stock into the metropolis, and steamers bring them from Holland and Denmark to the quays below London Bridge. Very recently, a plan has been commenced for landing these Dutch and Danish cattle at Harwich, and forwarding them by rail to the very gates of the market: thereby obviating the necessity for driving them through the City streets from the quays or docks. The North-Western and Great Northern bring up mighty flocks and herds from the north; the Great Western brings the Devons and the Herefords, the Welsh and the Irish; and the Eastern Counties (or Great Eastern) brings those which have been fattened in the rich pastures of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. The southern railways contribute only in a minor degree to the supply. Every year the ratio of foreign to British live-stock is increasing, without lessening by a single penny the prosperity of our own graziers: showing one of the manifold advantages of free trade in the supply of food. As to the number of animals thus consigned annually to the mercies of the London butchers, they are something marvellous. In the last ten years of old Smithfield Market, the cattle brought thither for sale varied from 193,000 to 277,000 in each year, and the sheep from 1,344,000 to 1,461,000. Dividing these quantities by 104, the number of market-days in a year, an industrious schoolboy might find what are the average numbers on each market-day. The latest available returns at the New Cattle Market (for which we are indebted to the courtesy of the clerk of the market) are those for the year 1862; they tell of 304,741 bullocks, 1,498,500 sheep, 27,951 calves, and 29,470 pigs. The bullocks, we are told, average about 680 lb. each, the sheep about 90 lb., and the calves about 150 lb. The great Christmas sale, for reasons connected with our national love of good cheer on Christmas-day, is always far above the average of other days. In the closing years of the career of old Smithfield, it generally ranged between 6,000 and

7,000 bullocks, and between 20,000 and 25,000 sheep. On the 15th of December, 1862, the last great day which we shall be able to talk about in the present article, the number of bullocks was greater than ever before known at any metropolitan market, being 8,430; while the sheep were only 20,900. There is something about this sheep-ish question worthy of note. Although there are more people than ever in London willing to eat and able to buy mutton, the supply of sheep at the Cattle Market is decreasing rather than increasing. Many and many a year, in Smithfield, the supply was larger than it was at Pentonville in 1862. The truth is, the country sheep-farmers and graziers now send up many of their sheep and oxen dead instead of alive—especially sheep. They kill the animals, cut off the primest legs, saddles, sirloins, &c., pack them carefully in cloths made for the purpose, and send them up by rail to Newgate Market; where, unless the graziers have acted like scoundrels, by sending off their meat in a state unfit for food, it is unpacked in a cool and perfectly wholesome condition. It is found, all things considered, that this is frequently more profitable than sending up the sheep and oxen alive; and the system is extending every year. The City people do not like it, because Newgate Street is too much blocked up by the bustle of the dead-meat market; the Leadenhall and White-chapel slaughtermen do not like it, because it interferes with their trade; and our country cousins do not like it, because we run away with the prime legs and saddles of mutton, and leave them to do their best with the shoulders and scrags; but nevertheless the system has many advantages.

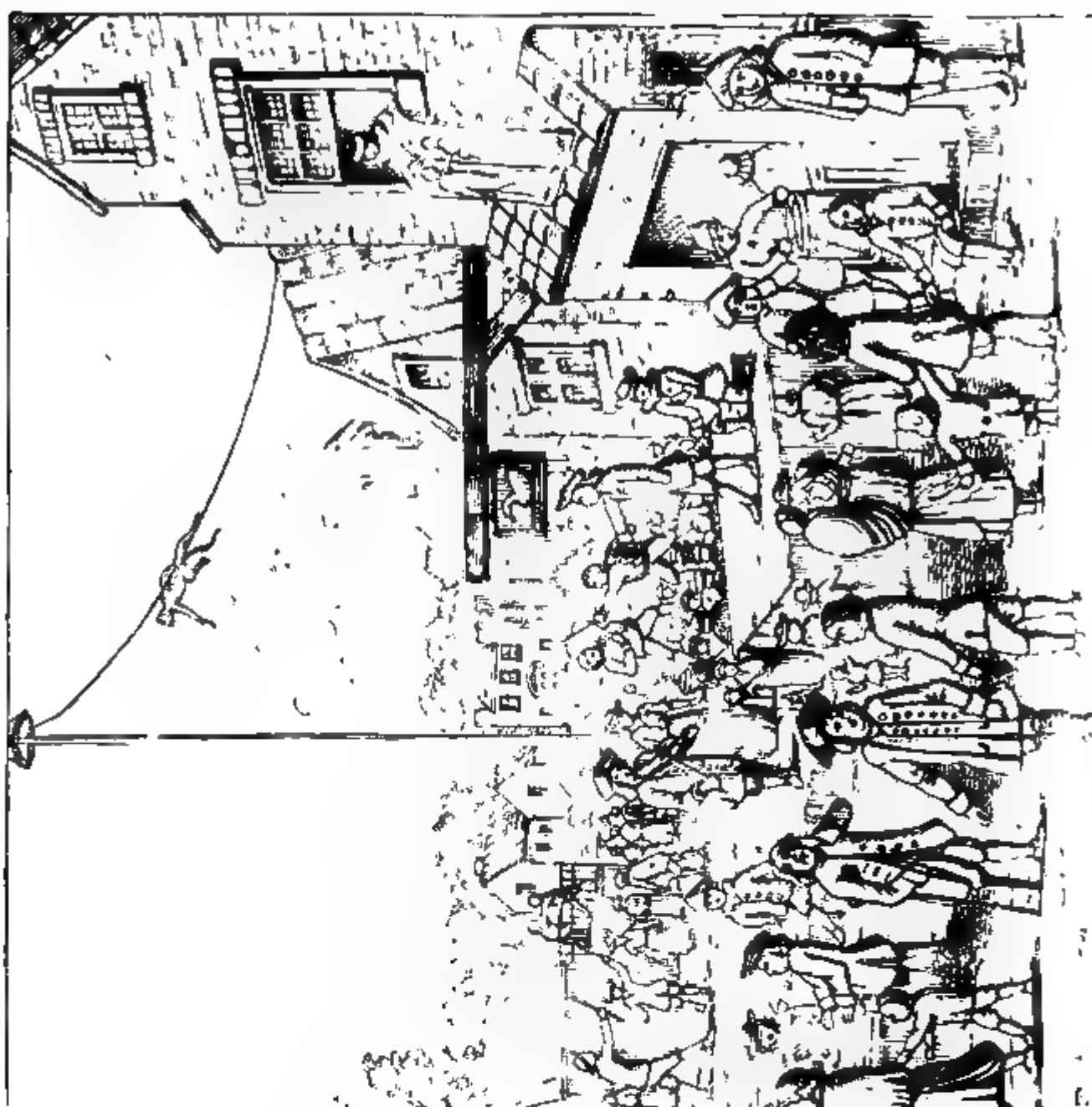
Picking our way along the well-arranged avenues of the market on a busy day, we shall be sure to see salesmen all around us. These salesmen illustrate the remarkable way in which the trade of the market is carried on. The graziers and sheep-farmers do not sell to the butchers; they know nothing of them, for the salesmen take all the trouble off their hands. Sometimes

salesmen come up from the country ; sometimes, residing in London, they daily receive letters and telegraphic messages from their clients, the stock-farmers. They usually know beforehand how many live-stock will be consigned to their care for a particular market-day, and they arrange with the clerk of the market for pen-space and rail-space. The salesmen must be 'early birds,' for they are ready to receive the live-stock as soon as it arrives ; and as the butchers are also up betimes, there is a vast amount of business transacted before London has rubbed its eyes and taken off its nightcap. Most of the butchers deal with particular salesmen ; but it is open to them to deal with any. The salesman knows exactly the state of the market ; and it is upon him, rather than upon the farmer or the butcher, that depends the range of prices on any particular day : he gets the highest prices he can, but does not spoil the market by holding out too long against unwilling buyers. It is a custom of the place that no money goes from butcher to salesman in the open market ; they both enter one of the banking-houses near the clock tower, and the clerks make out an exact account of the market tolls, the salesman's commission, and the banker's commission, in addition to the price of the animals. These three extra items together only amount to a small sum, about 4s. for a bullock and 8d. for a sheep. Each salesman transacts his business with one particular banker ; and when the day's business is over, the banker assists him in transmitting the proceeds to his country clients, minus the small expense-charges which have to be deducted. The system is so thoroughly organized and well understood, that both farmer and butcher are better served under it than if there were no intermediate salesman.

And the drovers, and the dogs ! what about them ? They are generally the servants of the salesmen, though licensed (the men, if not the dogs) by the Corporation. What a rough set they are ! True, they have rough work to do, and their patience is much tried in the attempt to

guide or drive their *proceeds* through the busy streets of London. Some of them take charge of the animals at the railway-stations and at the landing-places (from the steamers, and pilot them to Pentonville ; while others, after the market, see them safely to the butchers or to the slaughter-houses. Matters are better now with these men than in former days, so far as regards the kind of work, if not the rate of payment. It was a dreadful scene, that of getting the poor beasts into Smithfield before sale, and out of Smithfield after it ; the crush, the cursing, the cruelty, were something awful. The substitution of the fine New Cattle Market for the old one, and the convenient position of two or three railway-stations near it, enable the drovers, as well as the butchers, to behave a little more like civilized beings on market-days.

As we have no Zadkiel's Magic Crystal to look into, we cannot see what will be the number of *rosbifs* on London dinner-tables on Christmas Day, 1863 ; but if the precedent of 1862 be followed, there will be something like 8,000,000 lbs. of live-stock at Pentonville on the 'great day' for the present year. Would that all the poor in our metropolis could obtain a rateable proportion of this good cheer ! Why, it would give us nearly three pounds a-piece, besides the country-killed meat, the porkers and sucking-pigs, geese and turkeys, fowls and chickens, hams and tongues, and all the rest of it. Few things are more wonderful than the manner in which a bountiful Providence brings together food for three millions of persons living in one great city ; and yet we seldom think about it. We know that if we have money in our pockets or purses, the food is to be had close to our own doors. No scarcity in any other part of the world produces scarcity in London : high prices there may be, but no scarcity. But if there be *not* money in the pocket or the purse—ah, well ! let us not anticipate evil ; let us rather hope that all the living members of London Society will on the approaching Christmas Day have a Christmas dinner to eat.



MAY FAIR A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.



TREETOLOGY in London presents many anomalies; the old rural names being still applied to quarters which present no other trace of their former appropriation. The histories in little of these places are so many episodes, or 'green spots' in the account of the great Town itself; and to show the changes of the tenants of such localities, as well as the transformations of their surfaces, is one of the most amusing and instructive phases in the painting of London life. Disraeli fully appreciates the interest of the subject, as well as the best mode of doing justice to it, when he observes, with reference to Lord Orford's project for a book-walk through the streets of the Metropolis,—'should it be carried into execution, it would be first necessary to obtain the *original names*, or their meanings of our streets, free from the disguise in which time has concealed them. We shall otherwise lose many characters of persons, and many remarkable events, of which their

original denominations would remind the historian of our streets.'

One of the most attractive localities for carrying out the plan which Disraeli has here chalked out,—is *May Fair*, named from its having been the site of a low metropolitan carnival, but known at present as 'a seat of the most elegant population.' It lies north of Piccadilly, between Park-lane and Devonshire House, and was originally called Brook-field, from its being close to the brook or burn—Tyburn. Here, in 1688, was appointed to be held, by royal grant, a cattle and horse market, twice a week. After the suppression of the annual fair held in St. James's Park, it was revived in Brook-field, as early as the reign of Charles the Second: Pepys, in 1660, calls it St. James's Fair; and the name was not changed until King James the Second, in the 4th year of his reign (1688) granted the Fair to commence on the 1st of May, and continue fifteen days after it, yearly, for ever; and where multitudes of the booths were 'not for trade and merchandise, but for musick, shows, drinking, gaming, raffling, lotteries, stage plays, and drolls.' The grant was made to Sir John Coell and his heirs for ever, in trust for Henry Lord Dover, and his heirs for ever.

In the *Postman*, No. 597, for April, 1699, we read: 'These are to give notice, that on the first day of May next will begin the Fair at the east end of Hyde Park, near Bartlet House, and continue for fifteen days after. The two first days of which will be for Leather and live Cattle; and care is and will be taken to make the ways leading to it, as well as the ground on which it is kept, much more convenient than formerly for persons of quality that are pleased to resort thither.'

Next year, by an advertisement quoted by Malcolm, in his *Anecdotes*, from the London journals of 27th April, we learn: 'In Brook-field market-place, at the east corner, is a fair to be kept for the space of sixteen (?) days, beginning with the 1st of May; the first three days for live cattle and leather, with the same entertainments as at Bartholomew Fair, where there are shops to be let ready built for all manner of tradesmen that usually keep fairs, and so to continue yearly at the same place.'

The Fair of next year, 1701, is thus admirably described in a letter of Brian Fairfax, in Nichols's *Tatler*, i. 418: 'I wish you had been at May Fair, where the rope-dancing would have recompensed your labour. All

the nobility in town were there, and I am sure, even you, at your years, must have had your youthful wishes, to have beheld the beauty, shape, and activity of Lady Mary when she danced. Pray ask my Lord Fairfax after her, who, though not the only Lord by twenty, was every night an admirer of her while the Fair lasted. There was the city of Amsterdam, well worth your seeing; every street, every individual house was carved in wood, in exact proportion one to another; the Stadthouse was as big as your hand; the whole, though an irregular figure, yet that you may guess, about ten yards diameter. Here was a boy to be seen, that within one of his eyes had *DEUS MEUS* in capital letters, as *GULIELMUS* is on half-a-crown; round the other he had a Hebrew inscription, but this you must take as I did, upon trust.* I am now drinking your health at Lockett's, therefore do me justice in Yorkshire.'

The May Fair of 1702, though it opened merrily, did not close without a tragedy. There was Mr. Miller's booth over against Mr. Barnes, the rope-dancer's, where was 'presented an excellent droll,

* This sight reminds us that a similar wonder was exhibited at the Bazaar, (now Princess' Theatre,) in Oxford-street, in the autumn of 1828; when a little girl was shown there with Napoleon Empereur on the iris of her left eye; and Empereur Napoleon on the iris of the right eye; explained by the child's mother intently looking, during her pregnancy, at a five-franc piece of Napoleon's, which had been given to her by her brother previous to a long absence. It is hard to say whether the marvel of 1701 or that of 1828 is most credible!

called Crispin Crispianus, or a Shoemaker a Prince, with the best machines, swinging and dancing, ever yet in the Fair.' The pickpockets and other rogues, however, flocked there in such numbers, that the magistrates interfered, and some soldiers taking part with the mob against the constables, a Mr. John Cooper, a peace-officer, was killed; he was buried in St. James's church, and his funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Wedgewood, before the justices, high constable, &c., of Westminster. The above riot led to an agitation to put down the Fair, when the *Observer* said: 'Oh the piety of some people about the Queen (Anne), who can suffer things of this nature to go undiscovered to Her Majesty, and consequently unpunished! Can any rational man imagine that Her Majesty would permit so much lewdness as is committed at May Fair for so many days together so near her royal palace, if she knew anything of the matter? I do not believe the patent for that Fair allows the patentees the liberty of setting up the Devil's shops, and exposing his merchandise to sale; nor was there ever one Fair or market in England constituted for this purpose. But this Fair is kept contrary to law, and in defiance of justice: for the last Fair when the civil magistrates came to keep the Queen's peace there, one constable was killed, and three others were wounded.' One Cork, a butcher, was executed at Tyburn for the murder; but the Fair was not abolished.

A few of the May Fair bills will best afford an idea of the show entertainments.

AT JOHN SLEEP'S MUSIC BOOTH, (FROM
TURNMILL STREET,
IN BROOK-FIELD MARKET, AT THE SIGN OF
THE STAR MUSICK-BOOTH,
DURING THE SIXTEEN DAYS OF MAY FAIR,
GENTLEFOLKS AND OTHERS WILL BE ENTERTAINED
WITH VARIETY OF ALL SORTS OF
MUSICK, SINGING, DANCING,
AND OTHER PLEASANT PASTIMES.
VIVAT REGINA.

WILLIAM REX.

MAY FAIR.

MILLER'S

OR THE LOYAL ASSOCIATION BOOTH,

AT THE UPPER END OF

BROOK FIELD MARKET,

NEAR HYDE PARK CORNER,

During the time of MAY FAIR WILL BE PRESENTED

AN EXCELLENT DROLL, CALLED

KING WILLIAM'S HAPPY DELIVERANCE

AND GLORIOUS TRIUMPH OVER HIS ENEMIES,

OR THE CONSULTATION OF THE

POPE, DEVIL, FRENCH KING, AND THE GRAND TURK,

WITH THE WHOLE FORM OF THE SIEGE OF NAMUR,

AND THE HUMOURS OF A RENEGADE FRENCH MAN

AND BRANDY JEAN,

WITH THE CONCEITS OF SCARAMOUCHE AND HARLEQUIN,

TOGETHER WITH THE BEST SINGING AND DANCING THAT WAS

EVER SEEN IN A FAIR, ALSO A DIALOGUE SONG.

VIVAT REX.

HUSBAND'S BOOTH,

AT THE UPPER END OF BROOKFIELD MARKET,

NEAR HYDE PARK CORNER,

DURING THE TIME OF THE FAIR WILL BE PRESENTED

AN EXCELLENT DROLL, CALL'D THE FAIRY QUEEN, OR

LOVE FOR LOVE,

AND THE HUMOURS OF THE HUNGRY CLOWN,

TOGETHER WITH THAT EXCELLENT ART OF

VAULTING ON THE MANAGED HORSE,

PERFORMED BY THOMAS SIMPSON, THE FAMOUS

VAULTING MASTER OF ENGLAND,

WITH SONGS AND DANCES, SCENES, FLYING, AND MASQUEENS,

THE LIKE NEVER SEEN IN THE FAIR BEFORE.

VIVAT REX.

THE DROLL

INTERMINGLED WITH A MOST

DELIGHTFUL MERRY

COMEDY

AFTER THE MANNER OF AN

OPERA,

WITH EXTRAORDINARY VARIETIES OF

SINGING AND DANCING,

by

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF SOUTHAMPTON'S

SERVANTS.

VIVAT REGINA.

ANNE REGINA.

AT MR. FINLEY'S AND MR. BARNES'S BOOTH,
STANDING ON THE SAME GROUND AS IT DID LAST YEAR,
DURING THE TIME OF MAY FAIR,

ARE TO BE SEEN

THE FAMOUS ROPE DANCERS OF EUROPE.

VIVAT REGINA.

From the above, and other May Fair bills of the same period, it appears that Soria as Scaramouch, Baxter as Harlequin, and Evans as an Equestrian, were the favourite performers.

The enormities of the Fair appear to have been little abated; for Strype describes it as a place 'where young people did use to resort, and by the temptation they met with here commit much sin and disorder. Here they spent their time and money in drunkenness, fornication, gaming, and lewdness, whereby were occasioned oftentimes quarrels, tumults, and shedding of blood.' Therefore, in November, 1708, the grand jury of Westminster made a presentment of 'the public enormities and inconveniences, and being encouraged by the example of the worthy magistracy of the City of London in their late proceedings against Bartholomew Fair, did present, as a public nuisance and inconvenience, the yearly riotous and tumultuous assembly,' called May Fair: 'in which place many loose, idle, and disorderly persons did rendezvous, draw, and allure young persons, servants, and others, to meet there to game,' &c. The subject was taken up strongly: Sir Henry Ellis, in his edition of Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, mentions a scarce Tract in his possession, entitled 'Reasons for suppressing the yearly Fair in Brook-field, Westminster, commonly called May Fair; recommended to the consideration of all persons of Honour and Virtue,' 8vo. Lond. 1709. 43 pages. The Fair was then discontinued; for, in the *Tatler*, April 18, 1709, we read: 'Advices from the upper end of Piccadilly say that May Fair is utterly abolished, and we hear that Mr. Pinkethman has removed his ingenious company of strollers to Greenwich.' And in the *Tatler*,

May 24, we read that 'the Fair is now broke; but it is allowed still to sell animals there. Therefore, if any lady or gentleman have occasion for a tame elephant, let him inquire of Mr. Pinkethman, who has one to dispose of at a reasonable rate. The downfall of May Fair has quite sunk the price of this noble creature, as well as of many other curiosities of nature. And great is the desolation among the gentlemen and ladies who were the ornaments of the town, and used to shine in plumes and diadems; the heroes being most of them pressed, and the queens beating hemp. Mrs. Saraband, so famous for her ingenious puppet-show, has set up a shop in the Exchange, where she sells her little troop under the term of "jointed babies;"' it is added, by the way, that the 'rake-hell Punch,' by his loose life and conversation, did not a little contribute to the ruin of the Fair.

The Fair of 1708 was the last for several years; but was subsequently renewed, as the accompanying illustration, from a coloured drawing, shows the May Fair of 1716, when the men wore all sorts of cocked hats to give a little life to their sagacity. Here we have the May-pole, with its flying rope; the mountebank on his platform; the preparation for the ass-race; the house on the right has its show-cloth of Adam and Eve; beyond it is the sign of the Dog and Duck, for duck-hunting was a prime sport here, especially for the butchers of the market; and in the distance is May Fair chapel. The rural aspect of the place—its gabled houses, backed by lofty trees, should be noticed, for these were soon doomed to change. However, the Fair survived; for the newspapers of 1736 inform us that 'an ass-race attracted vast crowds to May Fair;' and in 1744, the grand

jury of Middlesex, among several gaming-houses and places frequented by people of bad character, presented Hallam's New Theatre at May Fair, for its great meetings of idle and disorderly persons.

The Fair was held on the site of what is now Curzon Street, Hertford Street, and Chesterfield House and gardens. John Thomas Smith, who died in 1833, in his *Streets of London*, tells us that 'the ground between the back of Lord Coventry's, No. 106, (Piccadilly,) and the south wall of the Earl of Chesterfield's garden in Curzon-street, was, in 1723, an irregular space; "May Fair-row" and "Hay-hill-row" being, at that time, the only regular buildings. There was, within memory, on the western portion, partly on the site of Hertford-street, an old wooden public-house, one of the original signs of "The Dog and Duck," behind which, towards the north, was a stream of clear water, nearly 200 feet square, surrounded by a gravel-walk, boarded up knee-high, and shaded all round by willows.' This pond was notorious for the cruel sport of Duck-hunting: here is one of its characteristic announcements:—

'June 23, 1748.—At May Fair Ducking Pond, on Monday next, the 27th inst., Mr. Hooton's Dog Nero, (ten years old, with hardly a tooth in his head to hold a duck, but well known for his goodness to all that have seen him hunt,) hunts six ducks for a guinea, against the bitch called the Flying Spaniel, from the Ducking Pond on the other side of the water, who has beat all she has hunted against, except Mr. Hooton's Good-Blond. To begin at two o'clock.

'Mr. Hooton begs his customers won't take it amiss to pay Twopenny admittance at the gate, and take a ticket, which will be allowed as Cash in their reckoning. No person admitted without a Ticket, that such as are not liked may be kept out.

'Note. Right Lincoln Ale.'

Duck-hunting was held in such high repute in the reign of Charles II., that the King and many of his prime nobility often witnessed it, and with their dogs joined in the sport. In Mrs. Behn's play of *Sir Patrick Farcy*, a Sir Credulous Easy talks about a cobbler, his dog-tutor,—and his expectation of soon becoming 'the Duke of Ducking-pond.'

In Maitland's London, 1756, May Fair is mentioned as still annually celebrated. And, of its humours, some ten years later, we have a curious picture by that painstaking antiquary, John Carter, who, writing in 1816, says:

'Fifty years have passed away since this place of amusement was at its height of attraction: the spot where the Fair was held still retains the name of May Fair, and exists in much the same state as at the above period; for instance, Shepherd's Market, and houses surrounding it on the north and east sides; and White Horse-street, Shepherd's-court, Sun-court, and Market-court. Westward: an open space, extending to Tyburn (now Park) lane, since built upon as Chapel-street, Shepherd-street, Market-street, Hertford-street, &c. Southward: the noted Ducking-pond, house, and gardens; in a large Riding-school, Carrington-street, the residence of the noted Kitty Fisher, (about 1779.) The Market-house consisted of two stories: first story, a long and cross aisle for butchers' shops, and externally, other shops connected with culinary purposes: second story, used as a theatre at fair time, for dramatic performances. My recollection serves to raise before me the representation of the *Revenge*, of which the only object left in remembrance is "the black man," Zanga. Below, the butchers gave place to toymen and gingerbread-bakers. At present, the upper story is unfloored, the lower nearly deserted by the butchers, and their shops occupied by needy peddling dealers in small wares; in truth, a most deplorable contrast to what once was such a point of allurements. In the areas encompassing the market-building were booths for jugglers, prize-fighters, both at cudgels and back-swords; boxing-matches and wild beasts. The sports not under cover were mountebanks, fire-eaters, ass-racing, sausage-tables, dice-ditto, up-and-downs, merry-go-rounds, bull-baiting, grinning for a hat, running for a shift, hasty-pudding eaters, eel-divers, and an infinite variety of other similar pastimes.'

This account may be relied on, as Carter was born and passed his youthful days in Piccadilly (at 'Carter's Statuary'), two doors from the south end of White Horse-street.

Another of the Fair attractions was in a front one-pair room in Sun Court, [on the south side of Curzon-street,] where a Frenchman exhibited 'the astonishing strength of the *Strong Woman*, his wife,' which John Carter has very minutely described, and authenticated: he

tells us—a blacksmith's anvil being procured from White Horse-street, with three of the men, they brought it up, and placed it on the floor. The woman was short, but most beautifully and delicately formed, and of a most lovely countenance. She first let down her hair, (a light auburn,) of a length descending to her knees, which she twisted round the projecting part of the anvil, and then, with seeming ease, lifted the ponderous weight some inches from the floor. After this, a bed was placed in the middle of the room; when reclining on her neck, and uncovering her bosom, the husband ordered the smiths to place thereon the anvil, and forge upon it a horse-shoe! This they obeyed: by taking from the fire a red-hot piece of iron, and with their forging-hammers completing the shoe with the same might and indifference as when in the shop in their constant labour. The prostrate fair one seemed to endure this with the greatest composure, talking and singing during the whole process: then, with an effort, which, to the bystanders appeared supernatural, she cast the anvil from off her body, jumping up at the same moment, with extreme gaiety, and without the least discomposure of her dress or person. That there was no trick or collusion was obvious from this evidence of Mr. Carter: 'The spectators stood about the room, our family and friends; the smiths were strangers to the Frenchman, but known to us.' The Strong Woman* next put her naked feet on a red-hot salamander, which feat, by the way, did not surprise the narrator.

Another celebrity of the Fair was the celebrated gingerbread vendor, dressed in laced cocked-hat and feather, embroidered coat, ruffles, and white silk stockings, but better known by his cry of Tiddy Diddy, Doll-loll, loll loll. There was also a satiric exhibition of puppets beheading puppets in a coal-shed—in

* Mr. Daniel thinks the Strong Woman to have been Mrs. Allehorne, who died in Drury-lane in 1817, at a very advanced age. Madame also performed at Bartholomew Fair in 1752.—See 'Merrie England,' &c.

allusion to this recent punishment of the Scotch chieftain, Lord Lovat. Pennant, (who died in 1798,) tells us that he remembered the last celebrations of May Fair: 'The place was covered with booths, temporary theatres, and every enticement to low pleasure.' The Fair was finally discontinued at the instance of George, sixth Earl of Coventry, who disturbed with the riot and uproar of the place in the rear of his house in Piccadilly, procured the abolition of the Fair: his lordship died in 1809.

We now part with the history of the Fair, and turn to the period at which it became a fashionable locality. Much of the ground was built upon as early as 1704, when certain individuals, living in a place called 'May Fair,' are rated, for the first time, to the poor of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. In the same books, under the year 1708, is the following entry:—'Mr. Sheppard, for the ground-rent of the Faire, market, and one house, 1*l.* 1*s.*' And, in the year 1709, a rate is paid to the poor by 'Christopher Reeves, for the playhouse in the fair.'*

In the *London Journal*, 27th May, 1721, it is stated—'The ground on which May Fair formerly stood is marked out for a large square, and several fine streets and houses are built upon it.'

From the above Sheppard, Shepherd's Market derives its name.† He built and resided in the long white garden-house, on the north side of Curzon-street, 'for many years inhabited by Lady Fane, and afterwards by Lady Reade, who died in it.' In 1750, Mr. Sheppard offered to sell the above freehold house and garden for the small sum of 500*l.*, and after the death of Lady Reade the property was purchased by Lord Carhampton for that sum. His Lordship, having greatly improved the house, sold it,

* Cunningham's Handbook of London, 2nd edit., p. 327.

† In the now bygone farce, of 'The Lady and the Devil,' one of the characters, in a far-off country, sits down to write home to his dear love, Sal Hartshorn, in Shepherd's Market.

with the garden, to Mr. Stuart Wortley, afterwards Lord Wharncliffe, for 12,000*l.* (*J. T. Smith*.) Over against this property is Curzon Chapel, within ten yards of which was 'Keith's Chapel,' a place of great notoriety: both edifices are shown in the distance of the accompanying engraving. The Rev. Alexander Keith, the proprietor of the smaller chapel, was a disgrace to his cloth, and was indifferent to all objects but money and notoriety; by his conduct subjecting himself to ecclesiastical censure, and in 1735, to a public excommunication. Keith, however, excommunicated in return the bishop of the diocese; Dr. Andrews, the judge; and Dr. Trebeck, the rector of St. George's, Hanover-square. Keith's principal vocation was the performance of secret marriages at a minute's notice: they became almost as notorious as the Fleet marriages—6000 in one year; the busiest period of this illicit trade being Fair-time. The cunning with which he contrived to advertise this traffic in connexion with a domestic bereavement is ingenious.

'We are informed,' says the *Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 28*th*, 1750, 'that Mrs. Keith's corpse was removed from her husband's house in May Fair, the middle of October last, to an apothecary's in South Audley-street, where she lies in a room hung with mourning, and is to continue there till Mr. Keith can attend her funeral. The way to Mr. Keith's chapel is through Piccadilly, by the end of St. James's-street, and down Clarges-street, and turn on the left. The marriages (together with a license on a five-shilling stamp and certificate) are carried on for a guinea, as usual, any time till four in the afternoon, by another regular clergyman, at Mr. Keith's little chapel in May Fair, near Hyde Park Corner, opposite the great chapel, and within ten yards of it; there is a porch at the door like a country church porch.'

In the second volume of Horace Walpole's *Letters* (*Cunningham's edit.*) is some amusing gossip about Keith. Here is the story of Handsome Tracy, who was inveigled into marrying the butterwoman's daughter, in Craven-street. Tracy consented to dine with her: 'the mother,' says Walpole, 'borrowed some silver to buy a leg of mutton,

and they kept the eager lover drinking till twelve at night, when a chosen committee waited on the faithful pair to the minister of May Fair. The doctor was in bed, and swore he would not get up to marry the King, but he had a brother over the way who perhaps would, and who did.' Of Keith's preaching it is told that in his sermon on the death of Frederick Prince of Wales, he said 'he had no great parts, but he had great virtues; indeed, they degenerated into vices: he was very generous, but I hear his generosity has ruined a great many people: and then his condescension was such, that he kept very bad company.' And, when Keith, 'the marriage-broker,' was told the bishops would hinder his marrying, he replied, 'Well, let 'em,' but that he would be revenged, and buy two or three acres of ground, and 'underbury them all!'

In this chapel, James, fourth Duke of Hamilton, was married to the youngest of the beautiful Miss Gummings. The Duke fell in love with her at a masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. Walpole, writing to Sir Horace Mann, Feb. 27, 1752, says:

'About a fortnight since, at an immense assembly at my Lord Chesterfield's, made to show the house, which is really most magnificent, Duke Hamilton made violent love at one end of the room, while he was playing at pharaoh at the other end; that is, he neither saw the bank, nor his own cards, which were of three hundred pounds each; he soon lost a thousand. I own I was so little a professor in love, that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl; and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, why he played at all. However, two nights afterwards, being left alone with her, while her mother and sister were at Bedford House, he found himself so impatient, that he sent for a parson. The doctor refused to perform the ceremony without licence or ring: the Duke swore he would send for the Archbishop—at last they were married with a ring of the bed-curtain, at half an hour after twelve at night, at May Fair chapel.'

Within two years, in 1754, the Marriage Act put an end to Keith's vocation: the records are carefully preserved; for, the registers of the

May Fair marriages, in three folio volumes, closely and clearly written, are kept with the parish-books of St. George's, Hanover-square.

Curzon-street is named after the ground-landlord, George Augustus Curzon, third Viscount Howe. Mr. Cunningham relates an interesting association of the street—that Sir Francis Chantrey when a young man, and undistinguished, lived in an attic in No. 24; and that here he modelled his head of Satan, and his bust of Earl St. Vincent. At this period of his life he derived his chief support from a Mrs. D'Oyley, who lived at No. 21. In the large house, No. 16, for many years resided Sir Henry Hallford, the celebrated Court physician, under George III., George IV., William IV., and Queen Victoria. Sir Henry was twenty years President of the College of Physicians, and contributed much valuable information to the literature of his profession. In 1862, the above mansion was for sale, when the sum asked was 15,000*l.*, subject to a considerable ground-rent.

Chesterfield House and garden has been already incidentally mentioned. This magnificent mansion was built by Isaac Ware, for Philip, fourth Earl of Chesterfield, author of the celebrated Letters to his son: his boudoir he calls the gayest and most cheerful room in England, and his library the best; and his garden a scene of verdure and flowers not common in London. The columns

and the grand staircase were brought from Canons, the seat of the Duke of Chandos; and the copper-gilt lantern for 18 candles, was bought by Lord Chesterfield, at the sale at Houghton, the seat of Sir Robert Walpole. Lord Chesterfield died in this house in 1773. His spacious and beautiful library has 'the walls covered half way up with rich and classical stores of literature; above the cases are, in close series, the portraits of eminent authors, French and English, with most of whom he had conversed.' * * * * We shall never recall that princely room without fancying Chesterfield receiving in it a visit of his only child's mother—while probably some new favourite was sheltered in the dim mysterious little boudoir within—which still remains also in its original blue damask and fretted goldwork, as described in Madame de Monconseil. —*Quarterly Review*, No. 152.

With two more memories we conclude. In Chesterfield-street, almost within shade of the above mansion, once lived Beau Brummell; and at No. 27, Charles-street, a very small house, looking over the north wall, upon the garden of Chesterfield House—the finest private garden in London—lived Mr. Beckford, the author of *Vathek*,—in just such a loophole of retreat as delighted this man of taste and knowledge, 'run to seed in the gratification of extravagant freaks.'



A WHIST PARTY.

TO talk about whist now is to fetch groans from the ghost of poor old Sarah Battle: 'A clear fire, a clean hearth, and the rigour of the game.' The rigour of the game is gone. You may clean your hearth, and poke your fire, but you can't keep your partner from revoking, even if he does seem to be attending to the 'play.' It was different in Sarah Battle's days. Cards were cards then, and to sit down to a game of whist was to enter, body and soul, into a very serious transaction. Now-a-days people forsake cards to run after a parcel of pictures, and books, and magazines, and music. Even those who do still pretend to play have forgotten the good old long-winded game, and compromise themselves with short whist; so we must take society in London and elsewhere even as we find it; and if those 'flies who spoil the whole pot' will 'play at playing at cards,' if they will allow their atten-

tion to be distracted by mere ordinary affairs of this or another world, we, the old stagers, must needs comfort ourselves by the remembrance of the day when whist was a world also, sole, and self-contained. For whist is great. It may not be a nursery for emperors and field-mars-hals, as chess is said to be; but yet I think we may hold it to be equal to the production of a magistrate, or even a master in lunacy; for its proper study requires some foresight, and much discrimination.

But we need not wonder that the old faith in whist is fast disappearing. Everything in the present day is met by the two pass-words, 'What use?' and 'How soon?' The use of whist is a matter of personal feeling, and moreover, in its true form, it takes a long time to play; so we may fairly charge its neglect upon the impatience and cynicism of these latter days.

A gentleman, one not particularly

straitlaced in his opinions, told us to our face, the other day, that a pack of cards consisted but of 'fifty-two badly-printed bits of indifferent cardboard.' What could you say to such a man? It was idle to remind him of the harmless amusement and intellectual excitement therefrom springing; for he immediately referred us to the five thousand and fifty-two badly-printed passions which they brought into play. He affirmed that Collins's 'Ode' might have been written at the card-table, and that Le Brun's 'Passions' were evidently sketched in a gambling-house. We only mention this to show that the good old domestic, harmless, quiet, middle-class whist is looked at by a majority of the present generation from a point of view unknown to the old player.

Now, here is a game being played in a quiet, comfortable parlour. The four people engaged therein have for the time being devoted themselves somewhat earnestly to its development; and although the smiling gentleman to the left has made a few mistakes, I take this to be a tolerably fair sample of the sort of table we get in the present day. Evidently the point chosen is that most exciting one, 'the odd trick;' and if you take the trouble to look into the position of the game, you will find that the stout old gentleman who turns his back upon you has been quietly engaged in the task of what is called 'selling' his neighbours. They have, by means of some very, very old-world mystifications, been made to believe that the best cards have been played, and thereupon the elderly lady is somewhat gaily laying down her king, unaware of the fact that the ace in the hand of her inscrutable opponent is lying in wait to knock down his majesty. But not only is the old lady deceived into merriment,—her partner lightly pats the aged deceiver upon the shoulder; while opposite, even with a grim and disagreeable expression, sits one who waits impatiently to lose the game that is won. Mr. Inscrutable will secure the odd trick, and the game will be his. They will all cry shame on him for a treacherous dog; but they will none the less

have enjoyed the surprise his cunning has obliged them with.

Perhaps their faces are worth a little scrutiny. We are afraid they have not quite run the gamut of the 'Passions' in the high classic style of Mr. Collins, or indeed in any other manner; but you may be assured that the old lady has put her feet on the hassock, strongly resolved to relish her full measure of excitement, and that, moreover, she is getting what she wants. There is a roundness of face and chin, a shortness of nose, and a curdling up of the corners of the eyes, that promises a great capacity for the enjoyment of the present moment. We are only sorry that as much cannot be said for the gentleman who is sitting on her right. To tell the truth, his features do not promise an agreeable partner for the rubber or for life. He is so evidently in the possession of somebody else's teeth, and his own head of hair has been so conspicuously 'paid for,' that if to that slightly inflamed nose we add a twinge of gout, or a bunion, or even a corn, and finish with an apparently lost game, we must perceive that this individual cannot possess at this moment the most equable of tempers. In point of fact, all the really good humour is, as you see, on the losing side. The lady's partner to the left is a jocular man, and even somewhat given to that modern habit of violent punning, which I fear he has acquired from the Christmas burlesques. But the Inscrutable, the hero of the game, is neither a punster nor good-tempered. He tolerates his partner, and he puts up with his opponent, but he has a most undisguised contempt for them all; and if it had not happened to him to take this odd trick, goodness knows what might have been the consequences. How that double chin would have wagged!—how those eyebrows would have receded into the forehead!—how that under lip would have held a confidential colloquy with that great and insupportable nose, no one can tell. For the game is now over, the cards are to be put away, and they must all go down to supper.

ALL OVER LONDON.

I PRESENT myself to you as a man with a grievance. Have you anything of that kind? But of course you have. Every one has. None of us are without some Frankenstein, moral or physical. Still, allow me to say that yours must be a very excessive and abominable grievance, if able to challenge comparison with mine; I don't believe you can match it. It's a miserable consolation at the best; but I rather pride myself upon my misery as a peculiarly fine one. I flatter myself it's original.

One brilliant summer afternoon, I was strolling through one of our principal thoroughfares, and, for want of better amusement, presently stopped to look at a large collection of stereoscopic slides attractively displayed in a shop window. The pastime was somewhat dreary, and singularly deficient in interest,

until, to my utter amazement and indignation, I discovered *myself* as one of a gorgeously got-up group engaged in the solemn proceedings of a quadrille. I looked again—rubbed my eyes—said it couldn't be—but, no! the villainous fact remained—there was no mistake about it. By some atrociously surreptitious process my features had been transferred—I was doing *L'Étê* in a most excruciating way. My companions were far from possessing the stamp of gentle birth, or even average respectability; on the contrary, there was an unmistakable vulgarity about them. They looked for all the world just what they evidently were—a set of Bohemians dressed and attitudinized, at so much per head, per diem, in order to depict the presumed socialities of fashionable life. The whole thing was arranged to form a very im-

posing tableau. Of course the male performers were habited in the accepted, time-honoured, yet withal hideous garniture known by the title of 'evening dress':—the genius of the photographic artist was upon this question necessarily confined—but the representatives of the Marchioness So-and-So, the Ladies This and That, and the Misses What-you-please, were overpoweringly attired. The room was tremendous in colouring and gold; there were multitudes of wax-candles in miraculous sconces, which I strongly suspect formed a portion of some theatre 'properties;' and in one corner were to be observed a couple of long-haired musicians giving musical measure by the aid of pianoforte and cornet. Through an open door, the eye travelled down a fading vista of corridor illuminated by the flitting to and fro of elaborate flunkys, one of whom was bending reverentially forward with a tray, from which a young lady in light-blue was elegantly removing some refreshment, striving as much as possible to appear perfectly oblivious of Jeames's presence—such a method of proceeding being quite the thing in polite society.

You may judge, from this description, that the general effect was superb, and would have been entirely so, only that the apartment was about the size of an ordinary bath-room. In this, however, there was a fair amount of truthfulness; for does not Mrs. Chester Digby Plantagenet, Mrs. Walsingham Howard Percy, and the rest, contrive to bring about a hospitable asphyxia by the process of inviting a hundred and fifty guests into a space of twenty-four feet by eighteen?

But how on earth had I got into this hideous caricature of the 'upper ten thousand?' Why was I made to do duty in it? How had it come to pass? Here was I—Vandeleur Pemberton Mowbray—mixed up with the *employés* of a rascally photographer—literally forced into their company—made to posture delicately before the admiring eyes of a large coarse-looking woman in a gold tiara and ostrich plume. Vastly pleasant, forsooth! Why of course

my acquaintances would recognize it, and I should be more than suspected of hiring myself out at five shillings a day. What would be the use of my attempting explanation and denial? Horrible thought! And then that abominable Raster, with his infamous puns and inane efforts to be witty! Why I shall be driven half mad! He's sure to find it out!

I must confess that I became very free in speech—my mutterings spoke of Mephistopheles under a more euphonious appellative—five syllables is too much for a man in a passion—I was content with two, for which, in consideration of the exciting cause, I trust you will absolve me. It's no use saying, 'Oh! you must have been mistaken.' I tell you I was miserably convinced. Do you mean to say I don't know my own whiskers? Ah! that was what the wretch coveted.

But this was only the initiative of my ghastly experience. I suddenly reasoned upon the strong probabilities of being present in some other festive scene, and I was not long in discovering my fears to be lamentably realized. Just above the ball-room affair I found myself at a dinner-party. I was evidently a pet with the artist, for I presided at one end of the prandial board; I was carving, and Jeames (the same creature who was supplying jellies to the aristocratic young person in blue) was behind my chair. The parties here concerned were of a graver cast than those immortalized in the *soirée dansante*. The respectability of mature years seemed to be realized. Severe-looking gentlemen, in white waistcoats—a brace of military men, in *regimentals*—ponderous old ladies, in turbans and braided silks; and a sprinkling of youth and beauty. But this was not all. In another slide I was handing an enchanting damsel out of a boat. In another I was holding the arrows of a bewitching toxophilite. Then again I was at a tea-fight, going about with muffins: in fact, I was all over the window. My anathemas became more vehement and less suppressed in tone, and in a tole-

rather state of irritation. I walked into the shop, determined to probe this audacious robbery of my features to the utmost. But I had misgivings from the first as to the satisfactory result of inquiry.

In an authoritative, hasty manner I desired to see their collection of stereoscopic groups. I noticed that the attendant observed my abrupt method of conveying the request; but I was quickly supplied with a large stock. I soon found one of my own specials, and sought its reverse, in order to discover the name and whereabouts of my enemy, but, just as I expected, there was no address whatever. I examined others, with the like result; and finding that I was so far foiled in my endeavours to fasten on my villain, I inquired from the shopman the source of these specimens. He seemed surprised at the tone I adopted, but informed me that they had them from a wholesale house.

'Be so good,' said I, 'as to tell me at once *what* wholesale house.'

The attendant called his master, to whom I repeated my request.

'May I ask, sir,' replied he, 'why you wish me to give you that information? But, excuse me—and he looked a little puzzled—haven't I seen your face before?'

'Something very much like it, I believe;—there's the rascality of the thing. Just look here, sir!'—as with an indignant look I directed his attention to one of my immortalizings.

His recognition of the portraiture was immediate, and his face wore a dubious expression as to the suitable line of conduct and reply:

'Of course,' I said, 'you don't mean to deny that that is my resemblance; and I should like to know who has dared to take such a liberty.'

'Well, I must say, sir,' he replied, 'that I should not have supposed you to be one of our gentlemen, as we call them.'

'I should think not, indeed. Then how is it that I am in that picture, and in several others?' said I, hastily selecting some additional evidences, and handing them to him.

'Really, sir, I know nothing about it. It seems strange, I must confess.'

'Will you favour me by saying whether such a trick could be managed?'

He was not a photographer, and did not know.

'Well, have you ever heard that such a thing is possible?' I continued.

I saw that the wretch could say more than he chose; but he still fell back upon his presumed ignorance of the art. It was useless persevering any longer with him. He gave me the address of the wholesale house, and thither I at once departed; went over the same ground with the people there, and pressed the matter more stringently than I had done at the retail emporium. In truth I was in a positive rage, and insisted upon an elucidation of the mystery. All I got was a declaration that those slides of which I complained came from France. The rascals! they saw they were in a difficulty, and so fenced with it in every possible way. I asked for the name of their Paris correspondent, and so forth—that inquiry bringing nothing more than an assertion that they could not say whether the artist had direct connection with the house in question, or only sold to them; also that at that moment they could not exactly tell me the particulars. Of course theirs was a system of equivocation: I hinted as much in no very enigmatical terms, and left the place, vowing I would make them suffer for my annoyance.

Now I suppose you will desire me to give you some ideas of my own as to this inscrutable appearance of my lineaments. All I can say is, that in every case where I am made to do duty the expression of my features and position of countenance is precisely the same. Make what you can out of that. Of course the attitudes of body are various. In some rascally way, I suppose, my head is stuck upon another man's shoulders. One of the five-shilling professionals does the pos-turing, and is then decapitated, my upper elegancies supplying the

place. I can't tell you *how* it's done—I merely give you my suspicion. If you can tell me a better method of explaining the villany, why I shall be grateful.

On my way through the Strand and Regent Street I had the curiosity to examine nearly every window containing stereoscopic slides, the result being that in most instances I was intensely delighted by a recognition of myself. Oh, it was quite clear: I was all over London! and of course I had travelled into the provinces. My reputation as a photographic model was a great fact.

Three days after this pleasant discovery I met the atrocious Baster in Regent Street. The moment he stopped I knew my fate. He looked at me with a theatrically melancholic air, carefully got up for the occasion, and said—

'Mowbray, my boy, I have been longing to tell you how confoundedly sorry I am.'

'Sorry for what?' replied I, savagely.

'Oh! don't be regardless of the eternal friendship of Baster, whose soul was grieved within him when constrained to believe that Mowbray was hard up.'

'Confusion take you! What are you driving at?'

'Ah! there it is again—won't confide in Baster, who, when he knew of the miserable contingency, groaned in the miserable torture of his manly heart!'

'I tell you what it is, Baster,' said I, in wrathful tones.

'Oh! what! angry with Baster? But, do tell me, does the photographer stand sandwiches and bottled beer as an elegant refection in the middle of the day? And when do you begin, and what are the hours?'

'I know what you're after, Baster; but it's a rascally plot. Don't venture to say that you believed me to resort to such a means of obtaining a livelihood;' and I looked defiant.

'My dear fellow, I am far from wishing to offend such a chosen spirit of my heart as Mowbray; but be frank with Baster. Do; there's a good fellow! Baster wants to

know all about it: Baster has been extravagant lately, and is very likely to go in for the same sort of thing. Who knows?'

'You are pretending not to understand me. I tell you it's a vile trick.'

'Well, then, commend me to the photographic body for excellent faculties of inventive appropriation. Of course, Baster never doubts Mowbray's word.'

'I feel very much inclined—'

'To attack your faithful Baster. I see you do. I notice the eye as dangerous. Oh, the ingratitude of humanity! I shall be off; for I will not be instrumental in making you the victim of a lifelong remorse.'

'You're an ass, Baster!'

'There! he's calling me names; and what for, I should like to know. I merely utter the words of friendship—Baster's friendship!—and I am called names—'

'You insane clown! But, there—you are to be pitied.'

'Kind of Mowbray. But, now, I really wish to know whether that sirloin is a verity, or only a beautifully-painted wooden myth? and the turkey—is it a gastronomic bird, or only an economic substitute? and the piano, and the cornet, are they real, or dummy? And, oh! one word more. Is it true that you are engaged to one of the professional young ladies? I ask from a deep feeling of interest. Ten shillings a day between you—not so bad—that's three pounds a week. And, Mowbray—'

But I would not stand any more of it; so, calling him a confounded fool, rushed off in a very irate state of mind. Fine chance for such a mountebank as Baster: pleasant to be at his mercy!

The storm thickened around me from day to day. At an evening party I was assailed by inquiries highly calculated to contribute to my enjoyment. Young ladies had seen me, and wanted to hear all about it. I have no doubt the wretch Baster gloried in spreading my discomfiture. In fact, I know it was one of his grand resorts. Then I had letters from

friends in the country, confirming my preconceived notions of provincial celebrity. Altogether I am in a pretty mess.

Will you tell me what I am to do? I have threatened the wholesale establishment with legal proceedings—I have even employed the detective police to find out the author of this nefarious scheme, but he is still—'wanted.' To be sure, I have so far frightened some of the craft that they have promised to keep me out of sight; but how will this avail, even supposing that in some instances the promise is adhered to? I can't watch the entire British kingdom. I have had some vague notions of buying up all my horrors; but I don't, on reflection, see how that could be managed. Sometimes I think I will employ an

agent to travel about continually, and attack all he can see, from John o' Groats to the Land's End. Then, again, I decide upon making a personal tour of inspection: but I cannot discover anything positively remedial. The mischief seems to be done. It is an abominable Hydra.

I told you at starting that I had a grievance. And now you know what it is, I beg to ask what you think of it? What am I to do? There appears to me only one remedy in the present, and one hope in the future. I must either lose a grand individuality by shaving off my whiskers at once, or I must in patience wait for the time when my stereoscopic renown shall be forgotten in the advance of age.

P. E.

MY KING.

(A slightly altered imitation of 'My Queen.' See p. 448.)

WHEN and how shall I meet him? if ever,
 What are the words he first will say?
 How will the barriers now that sever
 Our kindred spirits be broken away?
 This self-same daylight on him is shining,
 Shining somewhere the while I sing,
 The only one who, my will resigning,
 Could I acknowledge my King, my King.
 Whether his hair be golden or raven,
 Whether his eyes be dark or blue,
 I know not now; but 'twould be engraven
 On that white day as my perfect hue.
 Many a face I have liked for a minute—
 Been chain'd by a voice with a pleasant ring—
 But ever and aye there was something in it,
 Something that could not be his, my King.
 I will not dream of him handsome and strong,
 My ideal love may be weak and slight;
 It matters not to what class he belong,
 He would be noble enough in my sight;
 He may not be brilliantly gifted, my Lord!
 And he may be learned in everything;
 But if ever he comes he will strike the chord,
 Whose melody waits for the hand of its King.
 But he must be courteous toward the lowly,
 To the weak and sorrowful, loving too;
 He must be courageous, refined, and holy,
 By nature exalted, and firm, and true:
 To such I might fearlessly give the keeping
 Of love that would never outgrow its spring:
 There would be few tears of a woman's weeping,
 If they loved such men as my King, my King.

THOUGHTS OVER A PICTURE AND A PIPE,

Thrown into Verse.

‘ Dulci meditatur avena.’

(Illustrated by M. T. Lawless.)

<p>WELL have you limned, Mr. Lawless, This young disciple of Raleigh's. Sure 'tis The Cock where he sits, Listening the jests of the wits, With that half-smile on his face, Seated apart in the place,— Head on one side, eyes askance, Noting with curious glance Johnson the burly and big, Wearing that seedy old wig, Jestng at little Piozzi, Tilting at coxcombly Bozzy. Or is it Goldsmith he spies, Laughing—with tears in his eyes, And in vest-pocket the guinea He'll give you for asking, the ninny. How on poor Noll they all dote, Drest in that plum-coloured coat! Or is he thinking on Savage, How want has worked its wild ravage,</p>	<p>Or how to Garrick's keen face Genius lends fire, blent with grace? Or by a casement flung ope Sits he, to smoke and to tope, Lazily casting an eye Over the stream, flowing by,— Merchant, thief, beggar, and beau, Passing—one ne'er-ending show? He rests, contented in soul, While the blue smoke from the bowl, Wavering up through the air, Perfume diffuses so rare! Shall I to tell you pretend What are the thoughts of our friend, Taking his pipe and his dram, Water-dilute, of Schiedam? These are his fancies, I'm thinking, As he sits smoking and drinking.</p>
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Old Ralph Ransome sailed the sea—
 Sailed the whole vast ocean through—
 And returning brought to me
 These rare cakes of Honeydew.
 Blessings on old Raleigh's head—
 Though upon the block it fell—
 For the knowledge he first spread
 Of the herb I love so well!
 'Tis a talisman defies
 All that care and want can do.
 There are few things that I prize
 Like Ralph Ransome's Honeydew!

Tell me not of lotos-plants—
 How the lotos-eaters lay
 Lazily in shady haunts
 Dreaming all their time away!
 There's a drowsier charm in this
 Than in lotos :—if indeed
 That same plant aught other is
 Than the soothing Indian weed :—
 Were it not, in truth then if
 I were of Ulysses' crew
 I'd far rather have a whiff
 Of Ralph Ransome's Honeydew!

Peace to old Ralph Ransome's bones
 Wheresoever they are lain,
 In some island of the zones,
 In the distant Spanish main.
 This Nepenthe, which he brought,
 Only careful memories ends—
 Does not drown one kindly thought
 Of my rarest of old friends.
 As I muse thus, lapt in bliss,
 Upward floats the vapour blue—
 The apotheosis this
 Of Ralph Ransome's Honeydew.

Drawn by M. J. Lawless.

"HONEYDEW."

[See "Thoughts over a Picture and a Pipe."

CHIT-CHAT ABOUT COOKERY AND OTHER MATTERS.

BY MADAME ENTENTE CORDIALE.

'Les animaux se repaissent; l'homme mange; l'homme d'esprit seul sait manger.'—
BRILLAT-SAVARIN.

'L'art d'écrire et l'art des ragoûts se sont singulièrement rapprochés.'—HOFMANN.

THERE is nothing more common than to hear on all sides of the inferiority of English cookery—in fact, that, nationally, there is no such art as cookery in this country; that roasting and boiling meat, and producing dough puddings with fruit in the centre, is not cooking. It is equally common to find in the same society some British Lion who will assert that it is impossible in the whole world to find anything superior to what may be seen in

London in that line: that, of course, it costs money everywhere to do things handsomely, and so forth; and that though French cookery may be all very well (on State occasions, indeed, indispensable in this very same gentleman's house), it is too expensive for everyday life. The general company agreeing to this cannot help, however, comparing notes of their individual experience with reference to the expense of their table here compared to what

they have been told it would cost in France to keep house in very good style: good style, you must bear in mind, means there a good dinner every day in addition to all the other decencies of life and accessories of a respectable establishment.

Still every one must acknowledge that there are many requisites to be united before you can hope to get any dinner at all, the chief of which is decidedly the cook. Of course, where it is common to find good cooks one may reasonably expect a dinner well dressed; and if the country does not number them among its indigenous products, we must import from abroad and naturalize the commodity.

It is, however, necessary to travel over but a very small space on this planet: you have only to steam for an hour and a half and you find yourself on the shores of a neighbouring country which contains what we want in great perfection and abundance. There, every one is born with a genius more or less adapted for cooking; high and low, all grades of society from the Baron Pasquier, Prime Minister of France, to the humblest *rissoleur de pommes de terre*, they all, to use their own expression, 'Savent mettre la main à la pâte,' which, in English, means that they all have a finger in the pie.

No sooner is a tall girl freed from her ten years' convent incarceration than she naturally haunts the *cuisine*, as much from an intuitive knowledge that it is her duty to be practically acquainted with all that passes there as from the delight of novelty. The little children play at cooking; and it is really, both in jest and earnest, the great occupation of the day to one or two members of every household. It is an acknowledged feature in their domestic life; and the result is commensurate with the study and pains bestowed on the subject.

Now, how is it here in England? No one can deny that girls with any claim to a good education abhor the thought. It is vulgar; it is low, degrading; in fact, she must be a very Pariah among boarding-school misses who would learn to cook or

confess that she knew anything about the matter. I speak generally, though I have known one or two very creditable exceptions.

When I say you must import the article you want from a foreign country, my meaning is not that the steamers must be chartered to convey cooks here. It is very difficult to persuade French women of that class to leave their own country. We must acquire that talent and bring it home ourselves; there is no other way, neither is it beneath the dignity of a well-educated lady to do so; and it is certainly very much to the interest of every one that the mistress of a family should study the subject of food both from an economical and a hygienic point of view.

During the brilliant epoch of the reign of Louis XIV. the first ladies of the land were equally distinguished in promoting the gastronomic movement and the literary movement. Maintenon cutlets give evidence of one great name. The Princess de Soubise has left her name to the very best accompaniment to ordinary cutlets, and it is said that the success of the princess inspired the Duchess de Mailly with an idea that has perpetuated her name in company with a *gigot*. There is an anecdote in the appendix of a recent edition of Brillat-Savarin's celebrated work relating how Madame de Maintenon, being jealous of the gracious reception accorded by the King to the loin of mutton of the Princess of Conti, confided her anguish to Père, la Chaise, who in turn consulted the Abbé Douillet, who very soon threw the princess into the shade by producing a duck 'au père Douillet.'

This period was contemporaneous with our own Augustan age. Read the 'Spectator,' or any book of that period giving evidence of middle-class domestic life, and you will find English gentlewomen of good position engaged in culinary operations as an ordinary duty. In the days of our great-grandfathers no girl's education was complete until, having left school, she was regularly and systematically instructed in the mysteries of keeping house. The

fashions, or rather the manners of that day required that the mistress of every establishment (unless her rank were very elevated indeed) should herself know how to cook and make pastry, preserves, &c., brew, bake, make cordial and medicinal drinks, and even wines. Oh, for how many years were those good old times deplored by white-headed gentlemen with tremendous shirt-frills! It is true that the manufacturing (if I may use such a word) and producing a great dinner in those days was a very different affair from that process now, similar only in one respect, that it involved a certain outlay of money and labour; but the object of this paper is to show rather that our ordinary food may be better cooked and served in a variety of ways, and yet not necessitate a great outlay of money, and not by any means to presume to offer advice professionally.

For those who have the smallest experience in their own affairs (I mean culinary affairs), there is no scarcity of cookery-books; and Francatelli's, though it frighten ladies ignorant of the subject, is the very best you can use. If you read French, by all means buy a French book: you need only pay three, or perhaps five shillings. Jeffs and the other foreign booksellers have them always in stock; and though the technical terms will puzzle you at first, there is a glossary in all works of the kind, and you will soon be as used to them as to *crescendo*, *sotto voce*, &c.

After every little continental excursion we come back wondering how it is we cannot have anything at home resembling, in some little degree, at least, what we have eaten abroad; but for want of possessing I may say the key to the new study, our attempts are abortive, the money is wasted, and French cookery is voted really too expensive.

Now and then, thanks to the *entente cordiale*, one of our dear friends chances to marry a Frenchman settled in England. The wife pays long visits to her husband's relations, cheerfully adopts for the time being their mode of life, and on her return home accompanied by

a very ordinarily gifted French servant, imports and imparts new light.

Let us suppose, now, patient and dear reader, that such an event has happened to your favourite friend. She is perhaps very happy, although not married to an Englishman. We will not suppose them rich; probably they have no more than the impossible 300*l.* per annum. At any rate they make the most of their income, and Madame B—— de C—— has at last succeeded in setting before her husband every day a dinner which does not call forth a remark on the astonishing ignorance of us *belles insulaires* on the great subject of cooking wholesome and palatable food.

She attributes her success principally to a very unpretending little book, which formed part of her wedding presents from France. With a few prudent deviations this book constitutes her culinary code; and her good-nature is such that mainly by the causeries of morning visits she has materially improved her young friends in this useful study: and for the following pages of gossip I am indebted to the reminiscences of those pleasant half-hours.

You must take a peep into a French *cuisine*. It is rarely a commodious place to English ideas, small always, and apparently ill-supplied in what we should look for: I mean such a kitchen as this which belongs to your friend's friend, who also have about 300*l.* per annum; and therefore it is just the very household to illustrate my preceding remarks.

You perceive, first, a shelf bearing some bright copper stewpans; there is nothing remarkable about them but the fact of their being as bright all round as when bought. This comes from the peculiar construction of the cooking apparatus. On another shelf there is a larger supply of earthen vessels of every sort of shape and size. All these bear the fire, and are much used, for there is a common idea that '*le potage*,' or '*le bouillon*,' or '*la soupe*,' or by whatever name they may designate their ordinary national food—everybody, I say, has a prejudice that it is best when made in an

earthen vessel, and I do believe we have no right to contradict everybody. Of plates or crockery you see none—all are put away in a cupboard; for it is only half-past ten, and the family are at breakfast and the one maid-servant in the bedrooms. Water is brought from a tank outside every morning to fill a receptacle which they dignify by the name of 'fontaine,' but which is really a portable cistern.

But the principal object is a stove called a 'fourneau.' The fire is not seen, but above it are a number of circular openings just the proper size for the stewpans; and adapted to these openings are plates of metal, moveable, so that you may moderate the heat if too intense. There is an oven—sometimes two—and a boiler, but which in a French house is rarely self-filling. 'Dear me!' you say, 'we have as good grates here, for these people can never roast, I am sure.' Indeed, they do roast very well; and although your English range is a magnificent affair when you immolate a sheep and roast half or a quarter at once, yet it is very difficult, and to persons of moderate capacity impossible, to produce a delicate *béchamel* or *soubise* over a fire as hot as Hecla, and almost as unapproachable. Besides, as I am writing for ladies, I wish to show them how the art of cooking may perchance be made easy and pleasant to them. And certainly roasting one's own face is anything but agreeable.

I have therefore described this apparatus because it is so cheap and clean that any lady may commence amateur cookery with great advantage possessing such a stove, which may be purchased in London, of French manufacture, and put up in your kitchen at a cost of five pounds. I have no doubt there are also a variety of English and American stoves equally cheap, which can be introduced in addition to the ordinary orthodox English range. The French ladies, however, have an undeniable advantage over us in the constant use of charcoal, which is not procurable here in the same abundance.

Add to the foregoing description

of a French kitchen a walnut-wood table, three wooden chairs, a sink without a tap above, hanging on nails in the wall three or four towels or cloths, and a saw, hammer, and various other useful tools; and you have a true picture of what I saw in a lovely French villa, or as they call it, 'campagne,' on the banks of the Saône.

In that part of France, and I believe every other, the breakfast is late, though light. The French are early risers, seven being a common hour for families where no business is carried on. It is general, however, to take something very light indeed on rising, and you may hear the door of every room open one after the other, and its inmate call out, 'Marie, ma soupe;' or 'Marie, mon lait,' as the case may be: and then Marie flies upstairs, replying, 'À l'instant, madame;' or 'Tout de suite, monsieur;' and carries the said beverage. Between this hour, however, and breakfast proper a great deal of business is done. In Paris most people breakfast about twelve, theirs being a *déjeuner à la fourchette*, and prior to that lawyers, stockbrokers, merchants, &c., have transacted important business. When they return home to breakfast, the children are at school and half the affairs of domestic life are over for the day. The Parisians in easy circumstances then go out visiting or shopping, returning to dinner about five or six, so that they may be in time to enjoy the theatre; and thus you see they have rarely in any part of France (for the whole country imitates Paris) more than two meals a day.

The French consider it a very pernicious habit to eat so often as we do in England. 'Cela fatigue l'estomac' is their constant assertion. They study their health greatly, and indeed chiefly in relation to their food; or, rather, they think that their health principally depends on the care bestowed on the selection and preparation of their food, as well as in the judicious choice of the hours of their repasts. All classes of the French people have the greatest dread of

adulteration; and the government most strictly enforces severe penalties on all vendors as well as manufacturers of adulterated food, however slight may be the degradation of the material. Every article must be simply what it is called in all its purity; for example, wheat-flour must not contain potato, beans, or rice, but must be simply wheaten flour, coarse or fine according to price. They declare, and with truth, '*C'est mauvais pour l'estomac*,' for you swallow a certain amount of innutritious matter, fancying that you have eaten proper food, and thus weaken your digestion; and as they seek a certain kind of innocent pleasure in the act of feeding, they find that it is only by studying this subject that they can habitually eat the variety of dishes they every day see before them.

Any one who will for a year or two study and practise this art will find that you may have a greater variety of wholesome food cooked at less expense on the French system than on the English. Many persons have an idea that variety in food is objectionable. I cannot think so: sameness palls in food as in all other things, and by a healthy variation the appetite is better maintained; but no one can refrain from wonder at the astonishing apathy of the English public under the terrible robbery they submit to by the open adulteration of most articles of food in everyday consumption. In vain do the most celebrated analytical chemists denounce this or that; the British Lion declares that his father swallowed it all his life without complaining; why should he, forsooth, want anything better? This apathy checks all improvement, all hope of progress (in other matters, too, unfortunately); so our little children continue to eat bread whitened with alum, and add sand as well as sugar to their pudding.

But I must return to this pretty country-house on the banks of the Saône. I think they were at breakfast. It consists merely of coffee, milk, toast, bread, butter, and radishes, with dessert, which follows every meal in France. The coffee is roasted in the house about twice

a week, and is generally bought by the bag—I suppose about a hundredweight. It is the only way to secure its excellence, and, besides, costs less. Be sure to buy two sorts, as it is better mixed. Mocha and Bourbon in France: in England, if you can procure it, buy Mocha and Jamaica, but avoid Ceylon, and remember the smaller the berry the better the flavour. The radishes on this breakfast-table are unlike those you see here: climate and soil greatly improve them. They were also sent to table in the prettiest way possible, looking like a shell full of tulips, the dishes for them being made purposely in that shape, and called '*raviers*.' It is done thus: the leaves are taken off, the top just flattened, and then with a sharp penknife the red part is cut in longitudinal strips, left just hanging at the bottom like the calix of a flower.

This operation and all other such were performed by the youngest daughter, who had just left her convent, followed by the blessings of the one hundred and twenty nuns, who instructed more than three hundred young ladies. She declares they give all their pupils the same advice—viz., to learn with diligence everything connected with household matters that they may make good wives; and by no means ever to return there, except as visitors to their dear old governesses, or to bring their own children in time to come.

Breakfast over, the great affair of the day, dinner, was in contemplation by the mistress of the house, who long before had gathered her fruit and vegetables for the day. This being Saturday, great preparations were made for Sunday, the residence being two miles away from town. Madame de G——, the aunt of our friend, Madame B—— de C——, had a married daughter who, with her husband and children, came to spend the Sunday every week—a custom all but universal in France. The husband's family in this case lived too far off, otherwise the visits would have been to each house alternately.

I do not now propose to give any

one an idea of a French 'home.' If I did, how I should astonish many of my very best and most respectable friends! Some, of course, in whose families intermarriages have taken place, know a good deal about it, but the generality of good honest English folks, who think the domestic virtues cannot or do not exist beyond their fog-bound land, would not believe me. Think of a country where you never hear of a son speak of his father as 'governor' or 'old boy,' and where every father, however humble, blessed with a trade, pinches himself for years to put by some trifling dowry for his daughter as an act of justice not only to her, but to the future son-in-law!

I have been led into this digression by the recollection of Madame de G——'s delightful Sundays. On Saturday mornings she always betook herself to town to order what was necessary for the week; and as this very next Sunday was graced by the presence of the English cousin, Madame B—— de C——, due honour was purposed to the guest. Madame de G—— dined and spent the Saturday with her daughter; and in the cool of this early September evening returned home with her two grandchildren and their nurse. This was, of course, the day of days for the children; and their 'bonne maman' (as grandmothers are always called) was to them the potent dispenser of every privilege and delight. Children in France in the middle classes have no nursery, no prison away from their parents, of which a cross nurse is the gaoler. These children, aged six and four, dined every day with their parents; and if absent for half an hour, would surely be inquired for.

Pardon this digression. It will, however, show you how gradually from their earliest childhood French women are initiated into the system of domestic management, and at how tender an age they are aware that in time they must superintend *la cuisine*; that they, too, one day must make an intelligent cook out of a raw mountain-girl, who must be tutored into a due consideration

of the importance of her own digestion that she may not torture her employers by unwholesome messes.

Sunday having dawned, these early risers rose earlier than ever, because, being devout, religious people, everybody went to mass at some hour or other. The servants and the tiny children went at seven o'clock in the morning. At eleven the mother, father, and daughter went to high mass; but before that hour Madame de G—— had, to use a very homely phrase, seen everything *en train*.

The weather was still too warm for a thrifty French housewife to eat or set before her guests soup made the day before. 'One can easily rise a little earlier,' said Madame de G——. So their excellent, clear soup, of that bright amber colour which never blesses your longing sight or palate in an English house, was *en train* before Marie went to mass, and the charcoal fire had done no mischief when she returned.

'I cannot imagine,' said Madame B—— de C——, 'how this soup is made. It is clear every day, and so perfectly bright and transparent. Polidore has often described it, but in our house we only manage to give him something black or blackly reddish. When I fancy it is better than usual, and ask triumphantly what he can desire more, he says, condescendingly, "*Ma bonne amie, tu fais de ton mieux, mais ce n'est pas du tout cela*," and sometimes I am really cross. But if this is what he wants, poor man, I pity him, for he has never seen it since he left France. One day I made, or rather caused to be made (for, alas! I can do nothing), something, as I thought, superexcellent. Judge what I felt when he positively could not swallow it! I explained that it contained wine and spice, herbs, butter and flour, and sundry other ingredients; upon which he laughed most heartily, and said he was not astonished at its being so horrible, for "*il y avait là de quoi empoisonner tout un régiment*."

'There is nothing easier to make than this soup,' said Madame de G——. 'The fault of yours was

that you mixed too many things together. What you are eating contains, besides the meat and water, nothing but carrots and onions. You wasted your money and your pains.'

The corners of the table, besides the usual spoons, &c., as in England, had each a little shell-shaped dish. In one were radishes, in another butter, in another anchovies, in another 'thon,' which is a Mediterranean fish resembling, I should think, the sturgeon, pieces of which are pickled, and placed thus at dinner. These four corner-dishes are very small, and called *hors d'œuvres*. No dinner-table is laid without them, and they serve not to satisfy the appetite, but to excite it, and *pour passer le temps*; and a great blessing it is, for we all know the anxiety of the giver of a feast when an undue period elapses between the courses. The very hungriest Frenchman who wishes *hors d'œuvres* and all such mockeries across the Channel, or in the middle of the Atlantic, will at last pick an anchovy to pieces rather than do nothing. And here let me recommend the adoption of a custom universal in France, but too much neglected here at the table of the English bourgeois. Whenever a plate is removed with one hand, with the other the servant should instantly place another before the guest. I remember, when a child, that matters were thus ordered at the table of my guardian, whose dinners and wines were unique. The fashion now seems to be to place beside each person six, eight, for aught I know in some houses twenty knives and forks. Whether this be to show off the silver, or that the servants think to save trouble, I know not; but it is certainly a most inconvenient arrangement.

In France they unfortunately do not change the knives and forks as often as the plates.

The soup being removed, the next thing served was a melon. Poor Madame B—— de C——, all English and well-bred as she was, could not eat melon as a *hors d'œuvre* — that is, with salt and

pepper. I must tell you this is quite the last fashion, and has been introduced by the numerous class who study their digestion so much. They say that melon can only hope to be properly digested in company with other food, and that, being so hard and cold itself, if eaten at the end of a repast, would retard the proper assimilation of all the other food, and I dare say they are right.

I really, by-the-by, forget whether the 'bouilli' (that is to say, the meat from which the soup is made) was eaten before the melon or not. 'What signifies?' you will say: 'surely it could not be worth much.' There I quite agree with you; for if the soup be good, the meat must of necessity be a shred, and *vice versa*; but, nevertheless, there are some of the daintiest gentlemen in France who cannot dine without this, the poor fare of any ploughman. In this case the company was not much to be pitied, for Madame de G—— had accomplished the benevolent wish of Henri IV.—she at least had 'poule au pôt le dimanche.'

With all their theory of eating nothing useless, this is to them what bread and butter is to us; and how should we get on from the cradle to the grave without bread and butter? When I should otherwise be condemned to a cold-meat dinner I order mashed potatoes, and then attacking the bread and butter, I think I have the best of it altogether, especially if I can get some salad, and a pear or two for dessert. For my part I despise 'bouilli' with all the vehemence my pen can express; but my French cousins retort, 'If you had only decent bread!' and what can I say when I know that the 'Times,' the thunderer, the Jupiter of England, is always hammering about that very thing? and yet there is no chance of our getting Dr. Daugleish's bread for many a long day. Decidedly we are fools here, fools of the first magnitude, to eat the rubbish we do.

Has no one else ever been surprised at our national neglect of soup, bouillon, or whatever you like to call it? After a long cold

country ride or drive you alight at a friend's house, and they offer you wine and biscuits—nay more, they produce them, and most likely one person in two accepts the hospitality. In France, ten to one, wine in the morning is the last thing any one, especially a lady, would think of, but a 'bon bouillon' is a very different affair. Besides being *mauvais pour l'estomac*, wine, they would say, is worse even for the head; and not a few would tell you in plain terms, immoral and 'honteux' for any female to swallow it before dinner. Candidly, now, are they not right? Ridicule and revile the French nation when and where they deserve it; but in the name of common sense applaud and imitate their joyous sobriety, for truly in the matter of spirituous liquors they know how to be 'merry and wise.'

The most judicious beginning for dinner is soup: being a highly-nourishing compound, and exceedingly light, it diminishes the otherwise too great quantity of solids likely to be taken; but remember, reader—English reader I mean—their soup is not like yours, and as thoroughly unlike it as is the remainder of your dinner.

While we are on this subject I will enable you to put in practice a piece of excellent economy. Having made your soup with three large carrots, how many servants are there who, thinking *all the goodness is out of them*, throw them into the dust-hole in London, or to the chickens in the country. In future use them thus the next day: rub them through a colander or a wire sieve, add the remainder of the soup left from the previous day, and one table-spoonful of Carolina rice boiled quite soft. This will then be a 'purée à la Creci,' and should be of the consistency of pea-soup. Considering you would otherwise have wasted the carrots, find the value of one spoonful of rice, and then say how much your soup costs.

I must apologize now for the last time: not having undertaken to produce a philosophical treatise on food nor a book of 'professional cookery,' but only to gossip, I will endea-

your not to stray too much at random, but return at once to this Sunday dinner with these nice French people. When I remember how long they sat at table, I am consoled to think that my digression really has not occupied the time of one of their courses.

The *hors d'œuvres* being cleared away, there was served a *pâté chaud*, and being the commencement of the shooting season, the *pâté* was of game, and had the pretty name of 'une partie de chasse.' It was the grand 'plât' of the dinner, and such an expensive affair is rarely indulged in by persons of such moderate revenues. It of course came from a 'traiteur.' After all the contents had disappeared, the crust was cut up and handed round, each person partaking of it, and thus also are *vol-au-vents* served in France.

Then came the *entrées*. These are the dishes which, in our young days, the genuine old British Lion used to call 'kickshaws.' I need not give you the etymology of the word; but Frenchmen themselves know that their food is sometimes so disguised, that they are fain to exclaim now and then, 'C'est quelque chose de fort bon, mais vous dire son nom ne m'est pas possible.' First were handed round the very smallest mutton cutlets, just one for each person and one to spare, no more; indeed the children had scarcely half of one. They had a minute portion of everything that came to table, I do assure you, and behaved with great propriety. They asked for nothing, because they knew they would taste all. One thing succeeded another, but not with haste, quite as much time being spent in talking as in eating. The remainder of the dinner consisted of a delicious ragout of sweetbread and sorrel, quails and a roast fowl finishing the dinner. The roast, whatever it may be, is always eaten the last, and few families ever have fish except on Friday and Saturday, when it is a rule of their church to abstain from flesh meat.

The *entremets*—that is, dishes served between the *entrées* of meat, &c.—were various vegetables cooked à la Française, that is, each with

some seasoning or sauce, not plainly boiled in water as here. I can hardly describe their amazement to hear of any one eating vegetables without any 'assaisonnement' whatever. Not even oil and vinegar! not even a persillade! Madame B—— de C—— amused them not a little by narrating her husband's astonishment at the first dinner he was invited to in London, it being only the usual Sunday dinner of his English cousins at Brompton—I beg pardon, South Kensington.

'Ma chère amie,' he began, 'there was an enormous dish with a very bright cover, a sauceboat, and a smaller dish, but no soup.'

'C'est égal,' said I, mentally, 'Polidore, mon ami, you must be weaned from your soup.'

'So off came the cover and displayed a splendid piece of salmon, to a large piece of which I was helped with some sauce, made of lobster, and quite red all through. It was strange to me but looked very good, and in effect I was not disappointed, except in one thing, I should have preferred helping myself, for Mrs. W—— gave me more than double what I should have taken; and being the most hospitable, kind woman imaginable, I ate it for fear she should think I did not like my reception. Only, ma foi, I was obliged to decline the boiled potatoes. Next, my dear, the table being small and the dishes very large, we were cramped for room at the next course. Two of these gigantic 'plats,' with large covers, were placed on the table, and two smaller ones also, and I began to think the dinner would be quite wonderful. When the covers were raised, we had two roast fowls, half an immense ham boiled, boiled potatoes again, and boiled cauliflower. I made, no doubt, an excellent dinner; but when I reflected that the pudding which followed (the classic plum-pudding) was boiled too, and also the custards, I was lost in astonishment. It was not from economy, nor from any idea of elegance that they thus avoided variety; and this heavy repast must have cost much more than those "gentil petits diners" so common in my own country.'

'But,' said Mad. de G——, 'as they were only four at that house, why did they have two fowls roasted? Surely one would have been enough; the other might have been better replaced by something quite different; an entrée, for instance.'

'Ah! my dear aunt,' said Madame B—— de C——, 'you could not get one servant in fifty to do that. For instance: the dinner we have to-day could not be sent to an English table in a house where there was only one regular servant as here.'

'Of course I know that now,' said Madame de G——; 'you, my dear, are our illustration of modern domestic education in England. Everything connected with mental culture has been pushed very far; but as for any idea of wholesome food for the body, you have yet everything to learn.'

'I don't know that,' returned Madame B—— de C——; 'we consider plain food the most wholesome, and I believe even here the physicians would say the same. Why, the lady who called on you yesterday mentioned that her doctor had ordered her to dine from one dish only.'

'Do you know what one dish means here? Soup, you know, counts for nothing,' said Madame de G——; 'our friend would not deny herself a *hors d'œuvre* or a salad, or any vegetable; these may all be eaten by her. The prohibition is mainly, I fancy, to deceive her into eating something; for it is just possible, if not ordered to eat of this one dish, this particular patient would try not to eat anything solid. She will take her wine and water as usual, and her dessert. Now is this what you mean in England by one dish?'

'Certainly not. In England it would mean as much roast mutton or beef as you can eat, and boiled potatoes, probably beer, too.'

'Well now in France we should think that a coarse heavy dinner, and unfit for any one except a man taking violent exercise, and I fancy our doctors would not recommend it. The great quantity of nourishment in roast meat, especially eating as much as you want at a time without any other food, I should consider

really injurious to the greater number of persons. But habit, of course, renders it indispensable to your countrymen.'

'But you know,' said Madame B—— de C——, 'I really don't think the English care so much as you for the pleasures of the table.'

This was a most unfortunate remark. Gentlemen in France commonly leave a good deal of conversation to the ladies; and I never remember to have heard a lengthened dialogue at table to the exclusion of ladies, but on this occasion there was immediately a chorus of dissentient voices from the male part of the company. It however subsided into this question: How is it possible to maintain the proposition that the English disdain the pleasures of the table, when the fact is notorious that eating public dinners is as much a social custom in London as it was at Sparta? With this additional fact that the custom there was deemed a bore, and here it is considered a treat and sometimes very good fun. Nothing can be done without spending (as a mere preliminary act) a small fortune in a dinner. Whether the meeting be to help the originator of a charitable design or to bestow on another the applause and testimonial commemorative of the completion of his successful efforts for the public good, a dinner must take place and be paid for, and therefore, say our French cousins, 'You ought to study the science of dinner-giving.'

We all know that fashionable folks, or, as some express it, great people, live after the French pattern as regards their table; but why should not smaller folks, good, honest bourgeois in England, also eat French fare if they like it? They could then abolish the present system of 'great spreads,' about as vulgar as their name in modern phraseology. A good dinner now means a French dinner; and surely some change from the monotony of plain joints could be best begun at home, when a failure would not be very vexatious. When success crowns repeated efforts, the new dish could be placed before guests, and thus any moderately energetic young housekeeper

can train a servant to cook a little better than the rest, only it is necessary that she should herself know what she wants to teach, or there is no chance of a respectable *dénoûment*.

To return. After the *entrées* and *entremets* are done with, a salad is invariably served, then cheese—generally two or three sorts. To this succeed the pastry, flans, custards, soufflés, charlottes, creams, &c., which figure in place of our pies and puddings; which latter, by-the-by, are now occasionally introduced in France, though in a most circumspect manner. The day will most likely never arrive when that horrid thing, a currant dumpling, or that more horrid thing, a rhubarb pudding, will be seen on a French table. No! they adopt the delicate cabinet pudding or a baked custard, which, however, they do in their own way, in a saucepan, with burnt sugar sauce, and call a '*flan anglais* or *caramel*.' It is a decided improvement on ours, and I may as well tell you how it is done to the best of my recollection.

Make an ordinary custard of six eggs to a pint of milk, leaving out three of the whites (which will make another very pretty dish), and, above all things, flavour the custard; nothing is so disappointing as insipid cookery; as Polidore says, '*Cela n'a ni vice ni vertu*.' Have a small enamel-lined saucepan with a flat cover. Put into this a few lumps of white sugar and very little water, only sufficient to moisten the sugar, and let it be on the stove till it begins to assume a bright gold tinge. Then take it off or it will speedily be black. In a few seconds it will be a nice bright brown, and then add as much water as it will bear. It must not taste watery, neither must it be syrup; practice alone will guide you. Never mind wasting a few lumps of sugar, for your lesson in cooking will not be very expensive even then. You must turn and twist the saucepan about till the caramel (this is its name now) has touched the side all round, then pour in the custard, put on the lid, which you must strew with hot embers, and let it do gently

for about the same period you would bake it. It will turn out very well, and is a pleasing change. It is eaten as often cold as hot.

Well, but the whites of the eggs are left, and you must not waste them, therefore you must now produce another dish, called '*pommes meringuées*.' Pare and cut up two apples, put them in a saucepan with a small piece of butter and some sugar, let them boil to a marmalade, then spread them on a small flat dish. While they are cooling, beat the eggs to a firm froth with some pounded sugar, and when quite stiff, with two dessert spoons shape this froth into meringues, which you must place side by side over the marmalade till you have covered it and completely hidden the apples. Strew pounded sugar very lightly over it, put it into a quick oven for a few minutes till crisp and bright yellow, and serve instantly. It is good for nothing cold. If you have a lemon at hand it will improve the flavour of the apples to put a little both of the rind and juice into the marmalade.

The last thing, of course, in a dinner is the dessert; and few persons perhaps know how useful a little fruit is in promoting digestion. Too much would be equally injurious after a full meal. Dessert, it seems, was a custom imported into France from Italy, from whence also they derived their first notions of elaborate and refined cookery. An Italian once said it was intended to '*puliziare la bocca*' by the delightful juice of fruit after the various viands of the dinner. At any rate it is a grateful conclusion. This over, coffee is served sometimes at the dinner-table, sometimes in the drawing-room, or even in an arbour in the garden, but generally at the dinner-table, ladies and gentlemen retiring at the same time, as I am happy to say they often do now in London.

Any one can judge for himself what the cost of life in this house was; and whether, by good management and the avoidance of waste, it need be much greater here. My advice is, unless you particularly like cold meat three days out of six,

try little nicely-made dishes; let them be solid; begin with soup, season the vegetables a little cleverly, and if you waste nothing you will not find that you spent more than before.

The most important thing is to train a servant to cook properly, that being done, each *ménage* can practise display, or moderate economy, as circumstances may require.

History informs us that Madame de Genlis having been kindly received and very happy while on a visit to a German lady, made the best return in her power by teaching her how to cook eight different dishes in which she was an adept. What they were I have long been curious to know, and never could learn; no doubt there exist some ancient *grandees* whose reminiscences could furnish the information, but I don't think it is in print. Madame B—— de C——, however, declares that one thing she learned in France is more valuable to an English novice than Madame de Genlis's eight, unless they embraced this knowledge.

You may remember that at the opening of the preceding gossiping chapter, it is stated that people roast at a little wee-wee stove without any open fire. True, they call it roast, and you could never say a leg of lamb thus cooked was not roasted, but it is nevertheless shut up in a saucepan. You hear in France of a '*gigot*' being '*rôti devant le feu*,' and '*rôti à la casserole*,' and both are very good; they will tell you that ours is the country for splendid roasts when you slaughter your holocaust, but for a little bit, my dear friend, economy forbid!

However good a cut out of twelve or twenty pounds of beef may be, you must admit that Sunday's roast, Monday's cold, Tuesday's hash, Wednesday's mince, and Thursday's broth made from the bones, is enough to send any man to dine at a club or a tavern nine days out of ten. Oh, ladies! if you hate clubs, and like to see your husbands at home, abolish cold meat, and learn to dress a cutlet decently in six different ways.

But first, hear about roasting in a casserole. You must have a very poor fire: this supposes you have nothing more than an ordinary kitchen range, at which even you manage to do it with care; but a good fire will be fatal to success. It must be clear, and producing but a very moderate heat, in fact something like the fire suggested by the following lines. It seems sacrilegious to quote them, the old poem is so very beautiful; but as they come to my mind, it is evident they illustrate my thought—

'O'er the pale embers of a dying fire,
His little lampe fed with but little fire,
The curate sat, for scantle was his hire,
And ruminated sad the morrow's toll.'

This is just the fire to 'rôtir à la casserole,' but unfortunately the poor curate had no chance of turning cook that night. You, who are more fortunate, may proceed thus, and as you will only gradually renounce large joints, begin with a leg of lamb, if you have an oval iron pot for it or a copper one, but tin is out of the question. Put in a spoonful of dripping, and when melted, place the meat sprinkled with salt, shut the lid, and leave it over the fire on the trivet; shake it up from time to time to prevent it from burning; turn it over and over, that it may be done equally. Should there not be sufficient moisture, add a little fat, but it will rarely be needed. When you consider the joint done, there will always be superfluous grease to pour off, and after placing the meat on a dish, add a little water or stock for gravy, boiling it up with a little salt, strain it over the meat, and it is ready for table. All the juice and flavour is concentrated in the meat, none can evaporate in this way, and, to my mind, we have better and more nourishing food if cooked in this way. If properly done it looks like a joint roasted before the fire; an experienced person knows the difference, but many prefer it.

The advantage in the saving of fuel is immense. In one instance you want the fiercest fire, in the other quite the contrary. For veal this method is incomparably the

best, and for all meats much to be preferred in a small family. When adopted as a regular system, cold meat is so thoroughly abolished that very often it is only by great good management that you can ever have a nice little bit cold for breakfast. Then inevitably comes the next lesson in the English lady's course, eggs! If there is no cold meat, Polidore must have something else. 'Eh bien! ma chère, nothing easier, an omelet, a fondue, œufs brouillés, an miroir, anything. I am not particular, but only hungry.'

Now you all know that we change servants in London, oh, how often! and yet how few are the ladies who meet with a servant that can make an omelet. A cook comes to be engaged. You ask what she can do. Anything is the reply; descend from generalities and name any particular dish, you might as well talk about dating by olympiads. Can you make soup? Oh, no! she is not a professed cook, therefore soup and jelly are out of the question; and she tells you again proudly that she can roast and boil anything, and fry fish. This latter she deems the climax of what you have a right to expect for twelve or even fourteen pounds a year. Once, in despair, a lady took a respectable woman, and forebore to ask these disheartening stereotyped questions. In due time she said, 'Can you make an omelet, cook?' To which the answer was, 'Hamlet, mum? oh, yes, I dare say I can, only we have no ham!' After this, ladies, it would be as well to know what your servants are doing, or they may endeavour to send you up Hamlet instead of an omelet.

In the same house, the master being, as the French say, *legumivorous*, a new cook espied what she deemed stale vegetables; and to show her zeal cleared all away tidy, as she thought, previous to her mistress's first appearance. But taking a very early walk, the poor gentleman descried the fowls making a meal of his spinach and sorrel, and other delicacies. He was quite a gourmand, and therefore managed his spinach after this fashion:—

say it was boiled on Monday, and sent to table properly seasoned, it went away untouched; the next day it was warmed with an additional piece of butter, and again not eaten; and so on for four or five days, each time absorbing more butter, till at last, finding it sufficiently good, he made an end of it.

In France the universal habit of economy and making the most of every little thing, added to the superior knowledge of the household servants, would have prevented this waste; but here the master was only considered mean and near to eat what the cook would certainly not have touched herself, till, after a short residence in the family, she began to get used to such different ways; but on the whole found the work lighter, and the little stove quite a comfort, particularly in summer. 'But, cook,' said the mistress, 'you like the food, don't you? You do our little bits so nicely now, I should have thought you were beginning to like French cookery.' 'Well, mum, I like some of master's things, such as them kidneys stewed with wine, and the larks with bits of bacon, and all them fancy soups which cost a'most nothing; it's very clever, there's no denying that.' 'You are certainly improved,' rejoined her mistress, 'for you never throw away anything now.' 'Why, mum,' replied the honest woman, 'it would be a sin to throw anything away now, for I know what to do with it; but if you will believe me, mum, I no more knew what to do with them green stews I saw the first morning I come, than the babe unborn.'

Again, I can tell you of another English girl in 'respectable service who washed a salad in warm water, and 'thought it was no odds, as other vegetables was used to hot water, and it kep 'em green.'

It is indispensably necessary that the mistresses should first learn before they can hope to teach the servants who at present torment them, unconsciously, so much; the whole fabric of society would be much improved thereby, but at present few indeed are the ladies who know anything about the

matter. The cooks, bad as they are, have the best of it. They have no theory, no science; only as Sir Joshua Reynolds said of another class of bad artists, 'Purblind practice leads the way;' and practice, with no theory to regulate it, is an unsatisfactory state for any art to remain at. The worst waste prevails, generally because no one knows what to do with the débris of dishes; things are ordered which the cook knows nothing about; recourse is had to a book which no one appreciates: the whole thing is spoilt. 'No one must'n' tell missis nothink about it; what's the odds? she won't know the difference.' And so the failure is dished up, sent to table, sent away again in disgust, French cooking declared unattainable, and wholesome roast mutton persisted in *ad nauseam*.

Recourse is had to a book no one appreciates. Most likely. The best books have been written by persons engaged in vast establishments, where important guests are constantly received, and banquets, almost regal, are of frequent occurrence. To serve such a house or palace, every arrangement is on a large scale, and the cooks engaged in preparing those dinners write only what they have practised. The student who follows them must for himself judge the quantities according to the extent of the dinner, observing somewhat the same proportions.

For instance, I will humbly comment on the opening directions of M. Francatelli, 'pupil of the celebrated Carême, and late chief cook to her Majesty.' He says you must begin a day or two before to prepare the grand stock—that is to say, the foundation of all your soups, entrées, &c., for your grand dinner. This will frighten no one; on the contrary, every one will see the advantage of having plenty of time. Read on: 'For a dinner of twelve entrées, two legs of white veal of about forty pounds weight, the same quantity of gravy beef, and forty pounds of leg of beef and knuckles of veal, would be required.' 'What! one hundred and twenty pounds of meat?' you exclaim. 'Monstrous!

Shut the book; send it back, and get another with the money; it will never be any use to me.' Don't be in such a hurry; read on, and you will find he takes out the noix from the veal to make two fricandeaux and other things; and when you reflect that this was the way things were managed at Buckingham Palace, most likely you will see that the provision was not too great for the magnitude of the establishment. But in the same paragraph he adds, 'Avoid the use of herbs and spices;' and this piece of advice is worth the price of the whole book. Overdoing and high seasoning are the rocks all lady amateurs would founder on.

What you should glean from the above directions is simply this, that you must extract the juice of beef and veal for your foundation stock, and, using vegetables to flavour, avoid herbs and spices in that stage of your preparations. It was the herbs and spices that turned poor Madame B—— de C——'s soup so redly black, and made it taste 'comme de la médecine,' as poor Polidore often said.

If you read French, by all means buy a little French book called, 'La Cuisinière de la Campagne et de la Ville,' or some such title, price three francs or shillings. At any rate there are others, should this one be out of print. The little books give their direction in the following humble way. For example, to make croquets: 'Take remnants of cold veal, roast or boiled, or fowl or rabbit—in a word, *ce que vous avez*; chop fine, add some bechamel sauce, *si vous en avez*, if not a little cream, a drop of gravy, pepper, salt, and as much flour as will suffice to make it sufficiently consistent; but this must be attained by practice,' &c.—which all amounts to this, that if you arrive at mixing the ingredients in proper proportions, you have attained the art of making a palatable dish out of any scraps you happen to have. But you must not imagine you can do anything without practice.

This is the secret of good management and true economy. Use what you have. I could even tack a

higher moral to the pervading thought of this little French book; we must make up our dinner decently with what we have at hand, not wishing for unattainable ingredients. In like manner, we must shape our course, prudently and thankfully, through the troubles of our own particular path in life, and not halt and spoil all by repining that our lot is not like Lady Jane's, or that of the Honourable Angelina Seraphina Fitz-Gigglestein.

Many persons will say this is all very well to write about or to talk about, but ladies will not care to try the experiment I recommend with such servants as are now to be had. If they reflect, they will find the worst fault of our poor servants is ignorance; their sauciness very often only comes to the surface when reproved for not accomplishing what they cannot know. Their position taxes not only their physical strength, but the moral power of endurance, their chief faults having been ever the same. St. Paul tells Titus to 'exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; *not answering again*, not purloining.' Was not our common nature the same in the remotest time? Boileau has this—

'— des valets, souvent voleurs et trahisseurs
Et toujours à coup sûr ennemis de leurs
maîtres.'

Probably they are our enemies sometimes: but our duty is to do good to our enemies, and also to instruct our servants.

It is greatly to be desired that as every one laments the want of good servants, each lady would endeavour to teach her own, and, abandoning the idea of finding a good cook, make one. There is no scarcity of nice housemaids. A dirty house in England is a rare object, and no lady would endure one. On the contrary, the vigilant eye of the mistress detects unbrushed stairs and unwashed mantelpieces, and things go on very well everywhere but at table. There, indeed, a new system ought to obtain. Cooking is a branch of domestic

business in which men will rarely meddle, gentlemen never, and the mistress of the house is sure not to be interfered with. With the exception of the great luminaries of the art, all cooks are women; would we could say all women are cooks. Lady Morgan says they were born to that end; and in the great endeavour to improve the working classes, this trade of cooking ought to be made a prominent instrument for their good. Miss Martineau has justly pointed out that the poor are worse off than they need be, if they

knew how to cook such food as they can procure; and tells us of the misery of whole districts where abundance of fish can be had almost for nothing, the inhabitants of which are in abject want, because they cannot turn into palatable food what they can so easily obtain.

Here is a field for philanthropic endeavours; and, like charity, we must begin at home. Women can best promote the cause of women; and in improving the moral condition of domestic servants, we reap an immediate reward.

LIFE'S FLOWERS AND FRUITS.

(Lines written to Mr. Bouvier's Painting, entitled '*Flores y Frutos.*')

I.

THE sunrise reddens the Southern sky,
And the dark-eyed Donas sing cheerily
As the matin-bell, with its silver chime,
Rings out o'er Seville at the bid of Time.

II.

Pink and amber on the market-stalls,
The melons gleam, and the burnished balls
Of the fragrant citrons, gold and green,
Nestle their polished leaves between.

III.

The purple plum and the white grape shine—
Generous fruit of the southern vine—
The yellow lemon, the orange rare,
Their perfume lend to the Southern air.

IV.

The rich red peach and the apricot,
In their baskets glisten—the sun grows hot;
Thirst grows apace as the noon-rays fall,
What reck's it, friends? Here is fruit for all.

V.

The market-maid with her flowers sweet
Comes tripping it down the broad sunny street.
Senora, they tell me that Cupids lie
In the depth of a Spanish Dona's eye!

VI.

What! a cloud on thy sun, my bright coquette?
'Is he come?' 'Ah, bella, not yet, not yet.'
Oh truant lover! what, doubt *her* truth?
Well, to love and to quarrel is dear to youth!

VII.

April has ever her smiles and her showers;
 We could gather no fruits had there bloomed no flowers.
 When a girl looks down with a blush and a sigh,
 We all know what the fruit will be by-and-by.

VIII.

'Neath a sheltering arch two maidens gay
 Sport, filled with the life of the warm Spanish day;
 Their ringing laughter of pure hearts tells,
 As sweet and as soft as the neighbouring bells.

IX.

One smiles quaintly in half-surprise,
 Looking into her pitcher with clear dark eyes.
 Looking into the crystal, not half so fair
 As the bright young face she sees mirror'd there.

X.

The other twines, whilst her soft cheek glows,
 In her jet-black tresses, a crimson rose;
 Half with a tremble, half with a frown,
 For it may be '*Some one*' is looking down.

XI.

Some one? Well, the old wall is wide,
 And a youth may look down on *either* side.
 Hearts *can* wander and eyes *can* stray,
 And a '*will*,' Sexora, *can* '*find a way*.'

XII.

Flowers of our May-time, flowers of our Truth,
 Oh! the golden days of our sunny youth,
 When the loves of two souls take for ever root,
 Turning life's spring flowers to its autumn fruit.

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

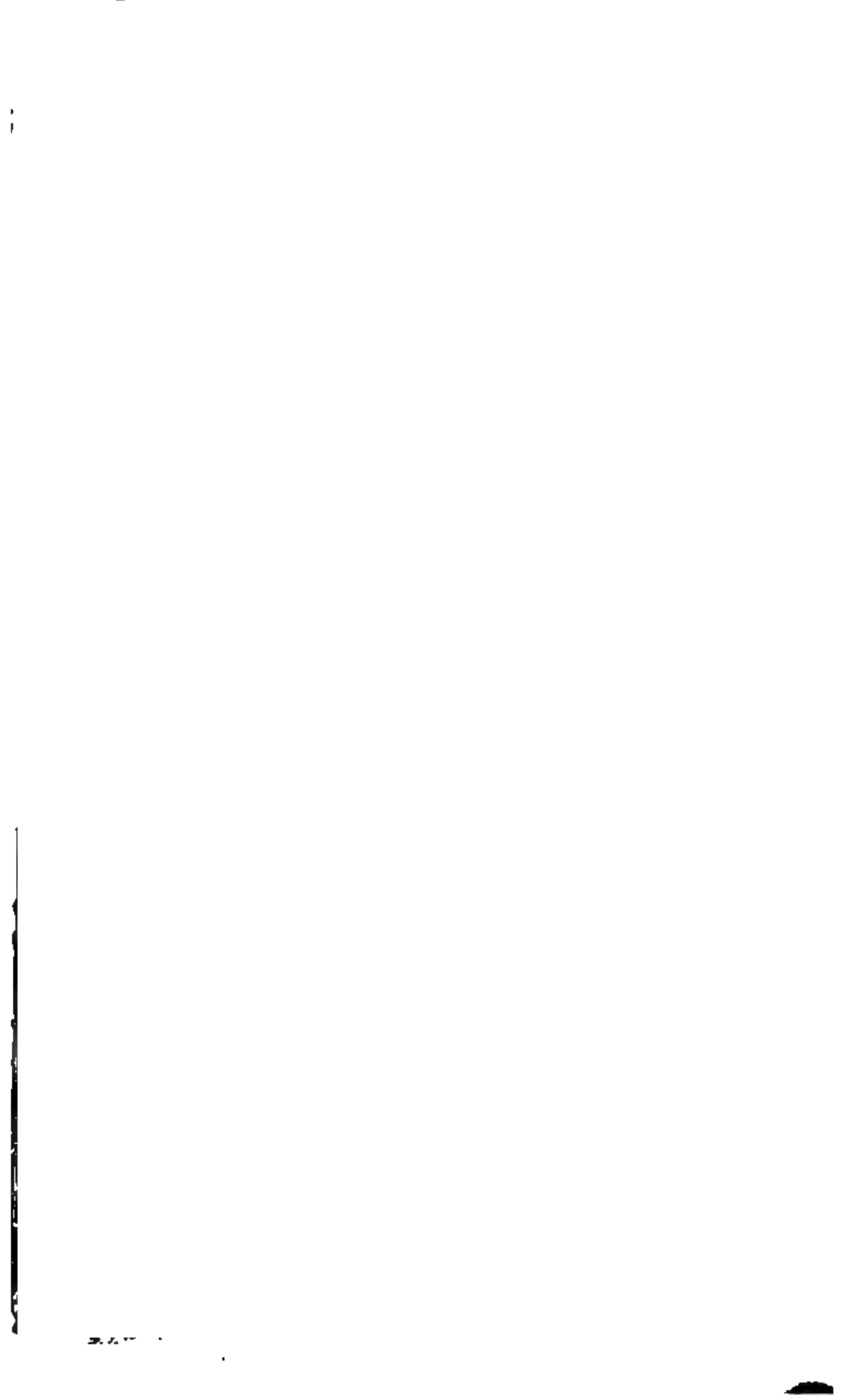


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vol. 4.

A LIFE OF FLOWERS: A PICTURE FOR CHRISTMAS MEDITATION.

Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

[See the Front.



LONDON SOCIETY.

THE EXTRA NUMBER FOR CHRISTMAS 1863.

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LONDON SOCIETY.



The Christmas Number for 1883.



THE EDITOR'S CHRISTMAS GREETING.

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The Editor's Christmas Greeting.

*It is by God's own holy rule
The closing of the year belongs,
To this fair festival of Yule,
That brings forgiveness of all wrongs :—*

*For, when the log is lit, and when
Rings out the cheery Christmas chime,
He, who can hate his fellow-men,
Knows not the blessing of the time.*

*A merry Christmas, once again,
To all within our sea-girt isle,
Where, in their order, sun and rain
Bid the abundant harvests smile.*

*A merry Christmas, too, for all
Who dwell beyond the ocean foam—
Exiles, to whom these words recall
The dear old memories of Home!*

*Nor must our workers be forgot,
Who toil with pencil or with pen,
To lighten life's laborious lot,
To cheer—and teach—their fellow-men,—*

*To lend the idle moments wings,
That yet shall upward tend and tower,—
To hang about earth's common things
Garlands, where healing blossoms flower,—*

*To fill the time, that might be past
In seeking some ignoble aim,
With impulses and longings vast,
With knowledge of the Age's claim,—*

*To wake the tear—that purest pearl
Which gleams on gentle Pity's brow,—
To show the drooping how unfurl
Hereafter's rays through glooms of Now,—*

*To tune the laughter, that might ring
In Eden's pure, unsullied bowers,—
To teach the human heart to sing
Through Trouble's darkest, longest hours:*

*This is their task—the chosen band
Of workers trusty, tried, and true,
Who spread delight in every land
Our pages reach—the whole world through.*

*Fair fingers ply for us the pen,
Or bid the ready pencil glide;
For us toil earnest, thoughtful men,
Who cheer and gladden while they guide.*

*We gather gems of passing worth
From artist, author, bard, and sage;—
E'en lofty dames of gentle birth
Lend courtly graces to our page.*

*A merry Christmas to them all,
Our comrades in the gallant fight
'Gainst care and sorrow, hate and gall,
For mirth, and kindness, and delight!*

*Our Christmas feast once more is spread,—
Songs, stories, pictures—prose and rhyme—
Mirth for the season, with a thread
Of noble teaching for the time.*

*For on the birthday of Our Lord
We hold it is the writer's part
To strive to touch that common chord,
In unison with every heart;*

*That so, whate'er the fancies be,
That throng our Christmas pages,—still
Some thought of love and charity
Shall make the reader's bosom thrill,*

*And he shall shut the book a while,
With kindly heart, and chastened mind,
Recall the season with a smile,
And say 'God bless all Humankind!'*

*A merry Christmas then to all—
We echo the good wish once more,
For sure the greeting will not pall
Though we repeat it o'er and o'er—*

*To each and all, to high and low,
That greeting is the old one still,
The tidings, uttered long ago,
Of peace, and kindness, and goodwill.*

A CHRISTMAS DAY IN A JEW'S HOUSE.

WE always 'keep Christmas' in our village, although it is the fashion somewhat, now-a-days, to sneer at the custom and profess to discover no reason for rejoicing at that particular season. Our neighbours are no better than other folk, but there are many acts of kindness performed by rich and poor, and some small feuds forgiven because of the usages of the time and the remembrance of the great event which they celebrate. No dwelling however humble but has its sprig of green holly in its windows, and when the inmates comprise both young and old, a bough of mistletoe is seldom absent. All this, perhaps, would be out of place in London Society, but we should miss these indications of Christmas-time, sadly.

Our rector is a stickler for all pertaining to Christmas observances, in and out of church; and he makes it a rule to invite certain of his friends and neighbours to make merry with him on Christmas Eve, not seeing anything sinful or uncanonical in 'a liberal hospitality' which embraces egg-hot and elder wine, and a round game of speculation. Sometimes, of later years, speculation has been voted too noisy, and one or other has ventured to tell a story, dull enough often, but we are good-natured critics generally, and especially on Christmas Eve, when under the genial influence of the rector's brewage.

Our doctor (he bought the practice some six years ago) has a reputation amongst us as a story-teller, and we now propose to narrate all that we can remember of an account he gave us last Christmas, after supper, of the way in which he came to have a Christmas dinner in a Jew's house.

It was to this effect.

'After passing my examination at St. Bartholomew's, I was assistant for some years to a gentleman, part of whose practice lay about the neighbourhood of Covent Garden and Drury Lane, and as the patients in those localities were not very aristocratic, they usually (except in cases of danger or difficulty) de-

volved upon me. It was in my professional capacity that I became acquainted with the story I am about to tell.

'There are many faded streets in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden—streets which, in time past, had inhabitants whose names will be ever associated with the arts and literature of our country; but their places are now occupied by less distinguished persons, although many of them are engaged in pursuits similar to those which developed the genius of their great predecessors. On the second floor, in one of those houses, lived Mr. Maul, an artist, who managed to earn a limited income by portrait painting. His powers of execution were by no means commensurate with his ambition, but they satisfied the class of sitters whose homely faces he transferred to his canvases. He was, in fact, the artist to a portrait club, established at one of the adjoining taverns, and his patrons were content to accept distinctness of expression and gorgeousness of attire for finish of manipulation; and Mr. Maul was always prodigal in those particulars, never allowing a portrait to leave his easel until he had adorned the subject of it with a waistcoat of chrome yellow and a coat of Prussian blue, profusely ornamented with buttons almost equal in appearance to original brass. Watch chains and bunches of ponderous seals were prodigally bestowed; and when finger-rings came in fashion with the vulgar, he never painted a hand without a carbuncle worth ten times the money paid for the introduced digits, and hands were always charged extra. Mr. Maul's remuneration was not excessive; but his engagements were regular, and he contrived to maintain a respectable appearance and to pay his way like an honest man that he was. Mr. Maul might, it must be confessed, have been a little more provident; but singing a good song, and having other social qualifications, he was induced, rather too frequently, to stay late at his tavern

and to spend more money than he ought to have done considering the precariousness of his employment, more especially as his pretty daughter Grace had no one in the wide world to care for her but himself, as her mother had died many years ago, when Grace was only a very little child, so young and plump, that her mother called her "Dumpling," and this name, for the sake of her, perhaps, who had bestowed it upon the child, had been retained, although modified somewhat into "Dumps" and "Dumple."

'It was not in the least applicable to Grace Maul when she was "sweet sixteen," as she had grown to be a most graceful maiden, her form quite perfect, and her face pretty enough for her beautiful blue eyes and rich auburn hair. Her disposition was worthy to be lodged in such a casket, as she was always kind and gentle, and loved her father so dearly, that she thought the good people who appeared in blue and yellow on his easel were quite equal to any of the much be-praised portraits which she saw on the walls of the Royal Academy when she paid her annual visit to that painter's paradise (or inferno); and nothing could be stronger proof of a blind love than such an opinion, for Mr. Maul was rather hard in his outline and usually flat in his colour. He was great, however, at expression, as the portrait of the landlord hanging up in the bar-parlour of "The Early Potato" in Covent Garden Market testified to all comers.

'Dumple was very clever with her needle, and Mr. Maul's shirt-fronts were the envy of his acquaintances. She was a capital housekeeper, and made the weekly earnings sufficient for all their wants and a few luxuries besides, as their sitting-room—it was Mr. Maul's studio also—was ornamented with such flowers as would grow in a London second-floor when carefully tended; and Grace was such a watchful attendant that her plants lived out their natural lives, and made, at proper seasons, the otherwise dull room look like a country bower. Nothing could be neater or more becoming

than Dumple's dresses, or prettier than her bonnets, and yet she was her own dressmaker and milliner, and had acquired the "art and mystery" of those important callings without the aid of an instructor. She made herself useful also to the great artist by "setting his palette" for him in the morning and cleaning it in the evening when he had done work, being very careful of the colours. At times, when other sitters than those connected with "the club" presented themselves, and artist-work increased, Dumple would "scumble in" the blues and the yellows, leaving the master-hand to insert the lights and shadows, the buttons and jewellery, with an effect no other hand could produce—so Dumple thought, dear child. As soon as daylight failed in the winter, and long before in the summer-time, Mr. Maul found his dinner ready for him; and though it rarely consisted of more than two courses, it was prepared so cleverly, and served so neatly, that it might have "put an appetite beneath the ribs of death," even as it did beneath those of the great artist who had won a right to it by his genius and his labour. Now and then, owing to the theatrical tendency of the locality, Mr. Maul was presented with "an order for two" to the play, where Dumple enjoyed herself to the utmost, and for days after, as it served her as the subject for conversation with her father, who knew many of the lesser histrionic luminaries off the stage, and also for her morning's reading, as she selected the play she had witnessed, and it was her custom to read aloud to her father whilst he sat at his work; and by so doing she had gained more knowledge than usually falls to the share of a poor girl who could not be spared to go to school at an age when she would have profited most by her studies. Dumple and her father were very happy together; and though Mr. Maul had his professional jealousies and sense of genius unappreciated, he pursued the even tenour of his way pretty quietly.

'But there came a need for the doctor. The painter's hand would not

work so obediently as it had been wont to do, and a numbness seized it every now and then which alarmed both father and daughter. It was incipient paralysis, no doubt, and the remedy was rest.

'Rest! Leave work!

'Why that meant more than the bodily discomfort. To rest from work implied an empty cupboard or the beginning of debt, which might go on increasing and increasing until it became too heavy to bear, and could only be laid down within the walls of a prison. Rest! Impossible!

'The unsteady hand worked on, more slowly every day, until at last the brush dropped from the powerless fingers, and the toiler's work was ended. Poor Dimple had watched daily the insidious approach of the terrible enemy, and, like a brave girl, had cast about to meet the consequences. Her skill in embroidery was now so employed as to help the wearied breadwinner, and she worked early in the morning and late into the night; but her gains were very small compared to the lessening earnings of her father. When those ceased altogether, her position seemed almost desperate; but Dimple had a brave heart beneath her graceful bosom, and she would not despair. Not she, though only eighteen.

'It wanted three weeks to Christmas, and Dimple had noticed lately, when on her way to the City, where she sold her embroidery, a number of young girls passing in and out of the stage-door of Drury Lane Theatre. She wondered what their business could be, and whether they were earning money. One day, after she had thought thus, she stood on the opposite side of the street earnestly gazing at a group of young girls who had just left the theatre, and who remained chatting together until they separated with laughter and smiling faces, going their different ways. As she continued looking after them, a Jew of some fifty years of age stopped suddenly near her and seemed to have found an interest in her pretty wondering face. He was not a very presentable person, being unshaven, and his

face, hands, and wardrobe would have been improved by a thorough ablution. He, too, had come out of the theatre; but Dimple had scarcely noticed him, her thoughts having been with the happy laughing girls.

' "What are you looking at the stage-door for, my dear?" said the Jew to Dimple; "is you waiting for anybody to come out? Everybody's gone, almost."

' "No, sir," replied Dimple, not feeling in the least afraid; "I don't know any one connected with the theatre;" adding, after a pause, "I wish I did, sir."

' "Why, my dear?" asked the Jew; "is you in the profession?"

' "The profession?" inquired Dimple, with a great stare.

' "Yes—they calls it 'the profession' do the actors," replied the Jew. "Is you wanting an engagement in any line?"

' "I should be very glad to—" Dimple paused, for her brave heart beat quickly at its own boldness. "Yes, I should be very glad to get an engagement if I knew how."

' "What as, my dear? Chorus? Bally? or only to go on?" asked the Jew.

' "I presume only to go on," answered Dimple; "I have not been educated as a musician, nor can I dance, I'm afraid."

' "Oh, dear! oh, dear! that's not a very good look-out for you: only fifteen bob a week, and find your own shoes and stockings," said the Jew.

' "Fifteen shillings a week?" asked Dimple, with great interest; "as much as that?"

' "Yes, at Christmas-time," said the Jew.

' "And could you—could you tell me how to apply for such an engagement?" asked Dimple, boldly at last.

' "Well, I don't think the number is made up, as I haven't measured half they says there's to be," replied the Jew; "and Mrs. Bellair, the bally-missus, won't let 'em wear no shoes but mine. There she is, a coming out of the the-ā-tre, and if you'll wait here, I'll ask her the question."

'The dirty little Jew' ran across the road in a strange shambling manner, and having had a few words with the lady to whom he had referred, suddenly presented himself in the muddy gutter and beckoned Dimple to come over to him. As she obeyed his summons, picking her way carefully from stone to stone, the shoemaker's professional eye glistened as he noticed the pretty feet—

'Which like two little mice peeped out
From underneath her petticoat.'

The ballet-mistress stared into Dimple's face, and then rapidly surveyed her figure.

"Yes, Myers, she has a good face and figure, and as we want most of our small ladies for Cupids and the tall ones for pages, I think I can engage her to go on. What's your name, my dear?" asked Mrs. Bellair.

"Maul, ma'am," replied Dimple.

"Maul, no; your Christian name, my dear."

"Dum——" she had nearly said Dimple, but replied "Grace, ma'am."

"Grace!" cried Mrs. Bellair; "Oh, that will never do. What names have we got to spare, I wonder?" pulling out a very soiled roll of paper. "O-ah! yes—here's 'Mathilde' vacant. You call yourself Mathilde, dear, and come to rehearsal to-morrow at ten. Of course, she knows she won't be paid for rehearsals, and that I expect a fee of one shilling a week for teaching her her business to the end of her engagement."

'Poor Dimple understood little of what she now heard, as she was quite overcome with her good fortune, although she knew she had to wait three long, long weeks before she inherited.

'Mr. Myers undertook to explain matters to his *protégée*, and proceeded to do so in the manner following.

"There, my dear, you're engaged for the run of the pantomime at half a crown a night, but you'll find your own shoes, and fleshings, and ornaments for you 'air if you wants any, except wreaths, and them you'll get in the wardrobe. You'll come to rehearsal to-morrow at ten, and

mustn't mind being put at the back 'mongst the ugly ladies and awkward ones. You'll soon make your way to the front if I isn't mistaken. Your shoes will be three-and-sixpence a pair unless you chooses to have satin, which'll be five-and-sixpence with sandals. I shall be at the the-â-tre to-morrow at twelve, and will measure you, for ready money, dear, as I works cheap, and am too poor to give credit."

'Dimple thanked her new-found friend, and then hastened home, fearing, however, to tell her father the new life which was before her. The poor painter was seated as she had left him, in his chair by the window, gazing every now and then at his empty easel, until he closed his eyes as though to shut away the present and the future. He would then look out vacantly into the street, regarding neither sight nor sound, as though all human sympathy had left him. Not so when Dimple spoke, as she entered the room. Her cheery voice went at once to the father's heart, and a smile played about the sad distorted features of the poor painter like a sun-beam upon a grave.

'She kissed him tenderly, and having taken off her bonnet and little cloak, showed him triumphantly the money she had received for her last three days' work at embroidery, clapping her hands as though the jangling of those two half-crowns was music to last for ever. The bright look had left her face when she had opened a drawer and added her hard earnings to the small sum which had been saved before the painter's hand was paralyzed, and which every week had made less. Now that she knew her parent's restoration was hopeless, she had determined to quit their present lodgings and seek some that were cheaper; but she delayed communicating the necessity for this step to her father, fearing that it would convey to the old man a conviction of his own helplessness and a dread of the uncertain future, and so she remained silent. The poor artist had nothing more to learn—nothing more to fear, as he had long known his fate, sitting there through the

long day with his palette within his reach—the tired old bread-winner—and without the power to stretch forth his hand and labour.

‘The next day Duple was punctual to the hour of rehearsal, and found herself much more at home among her stranger comrades than she had expected, although she had been rather dismayed when she first entered the dark, dismal theatre, so unlike the bright place she had seen it on those happy evenings when she had sat in the front with her father, and which had haunted her for days after. There was little time for such remembrances, as the practice preliminary to the rehearsal began. Her grace and quickness soon attracted the attention of Mrs. Bellair; and before the week was ended Duple had been promoted to dance—yes, to dance in the second row with the prospective salary of eighteen shillings a week. When she told the dirty little Jew of her advancement, he seemed as delighted as though some great advantage had accrued to himself.

“‘Well, Miss Matildy,” he said, “I’m as pleased as Punch to hear on your good fortin’. Second row and eighteen shillin’ a week. You’ll have satin shoes next pair, miss, and I shall take off the hodd sixpence.”

“‘Thank you, Mr. Myers,” replied Duple, “but I am compelled to be very saving, indeed. You have been so kind to me, that I don’t mind saying so to you. I have a poor, dear, helpless father to support, and——” she paused, smiling sadly.

“‘Don’t say another word, miss; I shall make ‘em you for four shillin’ and lose money,” whispered Mr. Myers.

“‘Oh, I was not thinking of the shoes but of something else, and in which you can, perhaps, help me. My father was an artist, but illness has now incapacitated him for his work, and as we have no friends, I must take care of him, Mr. Myers.”

Duple smiled again, but very pleasantly.

“‘Yes, miss,” said Myers, clutching his fingers as though he longed to embrace her; “I knowed you was a good girl, I was sure on it.”

“‘I am only doing my duty, Mr. Myers,” continued Duple. “We have hitherto lived in lodgings in —— Street, but our means are gone, and I want to find some cheaper rooms near the theatre.”

‘Mr. Myers took a small piece of chalk from his pocket and began figuring on the back of the scenes. He was not satisfied at first with a calculation he had made, and it required some further time to make it right. When he had effected it he exclaimed, “Yes, that’ll do.” Duple saw that the various items and the figures attached which he had chalked upon the scene, amounted exactly to eighteen shillings.

“‘I can’t see, miss,” said Mr. Myers, “that arter you have paid other expenses you can anyhow afford more nor three shillings a week for your lodgings, and rents is high about Doory Lane and Common Garden, leave alone taxes.”

“‘I suppose they must be,” said Duple, with a sigh.

“‘Now I’ve this to say, Miss Matildy,” continued Mr. Myers, “we’ve—that’s me and my sister Naomi—we’ve a second floor back and front, which we lets out to single men, but if them rooms’ll suit you we’ll say three shillin’ a week for the two and nothin’ for the water-rate.”

‘Duple hesitated to accept this liberal proposal with the readiness with which it had been made, for should Mr. Myers’s house, she thought, want washing, painting, and repairing as much as himself, it could not be a very desirable tenement. She therefore promised to think over the matter and call upon him the next day.

‘Having kept her word, Duple was agreeably surprised to find that Mr. Myers resided in a broad court (I forget its name), and that his house, though dingy enough without from age and weather, was cleanly within, as Naomi, the dirty little Jew’s sister, was a most tidy contrast to her hardworking brother.

‘The rooms were light and airy considering the locality, and Duple gladly closed with the Jew’s proposal that she and her father should occupy them henceforth at the weekly charge of three shillings. As she returned

to her old lodgings she turned over in her mind how she should break the matter of removal to her father, and inform him also of the important step she had taken; and so difficult did the task appear that she had to pause at the door before she could come to a decision.

'There was the old odd smile to welcome her when she entered the room, as though her presence had brought "sunshine to a shady place," and she acknowledged her welcome by a tender embrace.

"You have thought me a sad truant to-day, haven't you?" she said.

'Mr. Maul nodded in reply.

"Wait until I have put away my things, and then I will tell you what I have been doing," she continued, evidently delaying the communication she had to make as long as possible. Having put off her walking attire, she placed a stool at her father's feet and sat down. Taking his cold powerless hand in her own, she pressed it to her lips, and then looked up into his distorted face, her own beaming with all the love she had in her heart for the poor sufferer.

"I am going to tell you a secret, father," she said, "one which I have kept from you for some days, and only because I thought, if I failed in the experiment I was making, I would not distress you with the knowledge of my failure. I have succeeded, however, and so much better than I had hoped for that I have come at once to make confession."

'Mr. Maul again nodded his head, but his smile had gone and his eyes expressed only wonder.

"You have known—I am sure you have—that my earnings have been less than enough to supply our wants. Don't look so sad! I am going to tell you how I intend to make them enough, quite enough, dear father."

'Again she kissed the cold, powerless hand as though to thank it for all the work it had done in years past, now that she, "little Dump," or "old Dumble," was about to become the worker.

"Your savings, father, have

dwindled and dwindled under my care until I blush to say there is hardly more than enough to pay our rent here and help us to remove to a new lodging."

'Wonder again and sorrow in the old man's face.

"But did I not tell you I can provide for our future! Do not, therefore, look so very sad at leaving this old room, which now has more painful than pleasant memories connected with it. Our new lodging is quite as cheerful, and shall be quite as happy as this has been" (she did not believe herself or she would not have sighed so silently and deeply). "The rent will be quite within our means. Ah! you may look surprised, but I shall have employment next week—constant employment—which will bring in—oh! I hardly know what at present, when added to my embroidery."

'Mr. Maul muttered feebly, "What employment, Dum-ple, dear?"

"Duchesses, ladies, good women have worked at it, dear father; kings and queens and all sorts of good people have praised and rewarded it, and therefore old Dumble need not hesitate to take part in it. Do you guess what it is?"

'Mr. Maul replied in his usual manner, and shook his head.

"I thought you would not. I am engaged as a young lady to go on the stage at Drury Lane."

'This announcement was startling indeed to Mr. Maul, and his whole frame was affected, whilst a flush overspread his usually pallid features.

"You do not, must not disapprove what I have done, dear father," said Dumble, observing these changes. "It is the only employment I can find at present, and it is honourable to those who choose to make it so. You can trust 'old Dumble,' can you not? I have, therefore, taken lodgings not two minutes' walk—not one minute's run—from the theatre, so that I shall need no—— so that I shall be there and home again in no time scarcely. I have arranged to leave here on Saturday next, so we shall have plenty to do to pack up and get settled in our new home."

'The tears ran down the cheeks of father and daughter, but not from sorrow, as they were smiling also. Dumble set to work at once to prepare for their exodus, and when I called to visit my patient the next day I found her struggling so nobly with a four-post bedstead that I could not refrain taking off my coat and helping her to overcome the troublesome monster. Did you ever try to dissect a four-poster? Don't if you are wise. Castors, wrenches, and screws; legs travelling all over the room, and will not be dis-jointed; head-boards and laths tumbling about and finding rest nowhere and everywhere. Don't dissect a four-poster unless you have the patience and good temper of Dumble Maul. (The doctor's wife, whose name, by-the-by, is Grace, called him 'a silly fellow' for this commendation of her namesake.)

'The last chair but one, and all the rest of the worldly possessions of the Mauls were safely stowed on the hired van, and the little dirty Jew and Dumble waited to assist the now nearly helpless artist to descend, for the last time, the stairs he had trodden so often. They gently raised him up, and when the van-man had carried away his chair, Mr. Maul looked around the room for a few moments and burst into a passion of tears. Dumble could not restrain hers either, and from a clean streak observed on both cheeks of the dirty little Jew, when the party reached the street, it was conjectured that he also had yielded to lachrymal sympathy.

No one who had seen the rooms in the Jew's house during their former occupancy could have believed in the "transformation scene" they presented when Dumble and her father had been settled there a few days. There were green plants, though it was Christmas time, and neat curtains, well-ordered furniture, and a small bright fire in the grate. An old easel stood near one window, and at the other, in his easy-chair, sat the old artist, who had worked before it many and many a pleasant hour, looking out upon the world of the broad court and feeling that he had no longer a part in its struggles.

Not directly, certainly, as Dumble had taken up all his burthens except his sufferings, which he bore meekly and patiently himself, and never obtruded them upon his brave, loving daughter, after one brief conversation with her, and with me when I had described — compelled thereto by an earnest appeal from him — the probable termination of his case. He had spoken to her with great difficulty, and his manner had made his words more painful to her.

' "Grace, dear," he said, "the doctor has told me that my life is near its close. Since I have sat so much alone — powerless for work — thinking of the past and of the future, I blame myself greatly for many improvident acts. Well, if to say so gives you pain I will not dwell upon the irretrievable past, dear child, but believe that I have done my duty in part since you love me so dearly."

'Grace knew that he could not doubt that she did love him, and therefore she was silent, only kissing him.

'He then spoke many solemn words of hope and thankfulness, which Grace always remembered when she felt doubtful or sorrowful and a lonely woman.

' "There is one weakness I cannot overcome, Grace," he continued, "knowing how little it matters what becomes of this poor body when the spirit has left it, but — but where I laid your mother fifteen years ago I would —"

'Grace understood his wish, and promised that it should be accomplished, trusting in her heart that aid would be given her when it was needed, and saving week by week and little by little for an object which was henceforth regarded as a sacred duty.

'It was near Easter time, and tribulation came to the house of Naomi and Abraham Myers in the shape of a bad debt. The treasury of the Theatre Royal Squashborough had collapsed, and the manager was indebted to Mr. Myers no less a sum than nine pounds and some shillings. Mr. Myers had calculated upon this money to buy stock for his Easter orders, and having scant credit him-

self he saw only ruin in the loss of his money and the impossibility of carrying on his business. The few valuables he possessed when sold or pawned did not meet the difficulty, and he was on the point of abandoning the construction of several pairs of "pink fairies" and "blue pages" when a real FAIRY came into his dark dirty workshop (the only dirty place about the house) in the graceful form of Dimple Maul.

'Two pounds! Only two pounds would enable him to go to work and maintain his proud position of fancy bootmaker to the Theatre Royal Drury Lane.

'He could hardly believe his eyes when he saw Miss Matildy bring forth from a small purse two glittering pieces of gold and place them on his lapstone, saying—

"Mr. Myers, you have been so kind to me in many ways, helping me so often, that you must let me help you a little in return. That money I have saved by sixpences and shillings for a very solemn, sacred purpose, and I am sure you will repay me when you can."

"I can! I will, Miss Matildy," said the dirty little Jew, his tears almost washing his face quite clean. "I think I know what the money is for, and I would die—starve myself to pay it back to you."

'So the fairy held out her pretty white hand, and the gnome took it between his own dirty paws and pressed it to the leather apron which covered his heaving bosom.

'Oh, how exacting was old Myers that Easter time! No credit to page or fairy on any account (except to one young girl whose mother was sick), and he had been heard to threaten 'an advance of sixpence a pair if he were only asked to take a moiety on account. Poor little fellow! he scarcely rested until he had repaid those two pounds into the sacred treasury, and with interest—a gratitude never to be exhausted.

'The money was not needed until the last month of the year, and then the poor artist took a farewell gaze at his old easel and his young daughter's face and closed his eyes in death. Before he was borne away to rest by the side of his wife the

Sacred Treasury was emptied—quite emptied—of its contents, as the undertaker was "a man who had had losses," and cared not to have more.

'Drop the curtain and shut in the graveyard, and raise it again to the merry Pantomime!

'Why had Mrs. Bellair called "Matilde" into her own room and been so long in conference with her? Well if ever! not twelve months in the profession and going to be Columbine!

'Such was the fact. The grace and intelligence displayed by pretty Dimple had obtained for her this distinction and profitable engagement, as it was usual at that time to pay the principal pantomimists a guinea a night in consequence of the great exertion required from them. Six guineas a week during the run of the Pantomime!

"May it run for ever and ever, Miss Matildy," cried Mr. Myers. "May you get as rich as you deserve to be, and then you needn't envy the Bank of England, my dear! Only to think! Columbine your first season, as one may say! Who would have thought it the day——" The dirty little Jew paused suddenly, and so Dimple finished his speech.

"When you saw a young girl with a sad face looking for help from some one, and your kind heart understood her want and came to offer her the aid she needed; who would have thought that she would have come to this good fortune and have had her first kind friend still beside her to be made as happy as she is herself by the news?"

'The fairy hand was again in the paws of the gnome, who, having wiped his lips on his leathern apron kissed the pretty white fingers more than once.

'Naomi Myers had become quite a friend to Dimple Maul, and knew all her little anxieties and pleasant thoughts, and the condition of the empty purse also.

"What's that matter," said Mr. Myers, who, wonderful to relate, had arrived at a state of semi-cleanliness, having been asked to tea twice in one week in Miss Matildy's room, where Naomi had been at work (gratis) for Dimple—"what's that

matter! Miss Matildy shan't stand for nothing! She shall look the beautifullest Columbine that's ever been seen, and I knows where there's some loveliest wreaths that's to be had cheap for ready money."

"Ah, ready money! ready money!"

"That's to be had too, Miss Matildy. Ain't it, Naomi? Think how you trusted me once on a time. You'll want two pair o' fleshings, and such shoes you shall have! Fifteen shillings a pair I charge to the Hopera! Satin thick as a board, and fitting your pretty foot, miss, like a kid glove. Don't you fidget about nothing."

"Could Dumble decline all this kindness, needing it so much? No."

"The approaching Christmas Day would fall on a Saturday; and on the Wednesday preceding it, Dumble having nothing to do at the theatre, was to try on her Columbine's dress at her own lodgings, Naomi having obtained permission from the theatre to make it, she being very skilful in such matters."

"How had I known this? Why Naomi had told me so when I had called upon—Naomi—in the morning; and more, she had invited me, with Dumble's kind permission, to be present in the evening to judge of the general effect."

"Never was Columbine half so lovely! The delicate pink skirt, hooped up, displayed a gauze petticoat covered with silver spangles, and short enough to disclose two of the prettiest feet in the world, and which set off to the greatest advantage Mr. Myers's very best handiwork. Her beautiful face, glowing with excitement, was surmounted by one of those "loveliest wreaths" of which we have heard, and any one who had gazed upon the graceful being must have envied the happy harlequin." (The doctor's wife was fairly angry at this glowing description of Dumble, the columbine, and some of us thought her very ill-natured, despite her own buxom looks. The doctor only laughed and went on.)

"Some cheerful-minded philosopher has said, "that wherever pleasure is, pain is certain not to be far

off," and so it was to be with poor Dumble. During the next day's rehearsal she trod upon a loose trap on the stage and sprained one of her ankles, to the consternation of the manager and the distress of all in the broad court. I had the responsibility of attending that ankle, and, knowing how many bright hopes would fail to be realized, guessing, also, how much after-care would come if Dumble should be incapacitated from exertion, I would have given all I then possessed to have been spared the case."

"Dumble bore her misfortune, as she had borne her other troubles, most bravely, her greatest uneasiness being caused by the inconvenience she feared she was causing Mr. Myers, who had provided "the ready money."

"Don't mention it, my dear Miss Matildy, don't think of me, but—it won't matter a great deal—I don't think anybody will press me for the little I owe, and I shall only work the harder—but I won't believe you won't appear. Mr. Doctor won't let you not get well, will you, sir?"

"I could not promise confidently that Dumble would be able to assume her new character, but, secretly, I had hope that she would do so; and I neglected shamefully two chronic patients, who were annuities to my employer, to attend to that pretty injured ankle. To make matters rather worse, the undertaker had heard of the accident, and, fearing for the small balance due to him for Mr. Maul's funeral, wrote to poor Dumble and demanded an order on the treasury for the small sum coming to her for salary. Mr. Myers, most unselfishly and indignantly, insisted upon Dumble's compliance with this request, and when Christmas Day broke it found the poor dancer lame and penniless."

I did not suspect all this at the time, for I was young and thoughtless, and Mr. Myers and Naomi had invited me to take my Christmas dinner in Dumble's room, as they had concluded that the great holiday which Christians make of Christmas Day ought not to be passed in loneliness and sorrow by the good lodger whom they both loved so much."

'Just before the hour appointed for dinner, Mr. Myers, as clean as he could make himself, entered the room, followed by Naomi, each bearing a small basket.

"Here we are, Miss Matildy," exclaimed Mr. Myers, opening his basket; "here's two pound of roast beef from the best cookshop any-ways near Common Garden, and here's a lump of plum-pudden, all over reasons, and would do Mr. Rothschild good to look at it; and here's browny potatoes and greens, and mustard—rale Durban mustard cos I tasted it—and here's Mr. Doctor as invited. You not have a Christmas dinner on Christmas Day! I never heard of such a thing, and we'll eat it together, and so God bless us all with charity!"

'Yes, Abraham Myers, dirty as you generally were, there was a bright soul burning within you, and there were good angels about your

house 'on the day I ate my Christmas dinner within it.

'Rest and great professional skill (hem!) overcame the trifling sprain (for trifling it proved to be) which had caused so much anxiety and brief sorrow, and on Boxing Night our Columbine's success was nothing short of "triumphant" (*see the public papers*).

'Since that day, however, she has never partaken of a Christmas dinner but at my table, as some of you may have heard before, and which I now declare with thankfulness, for such a good wife as Dimple Maul has been.'

Of course! The name of the Doctor's wife was Grace, and he had bought the practice when his predecessor retired and came to live among us, bringing with him a pretty pleasant wife and four blooming children. How stupid not to have guessed this at once!

MARK LEMON.

CHRISTMAS CHARACTERS.

CHARLES DICKENS, who has done much to keep alive respect for Christmas customs in the breast of the English people, has made us acquainted with a curmudgeon who sneered at Christmas, and mocked at its innocent observances; but he was an old man, alone in the world, with bitterness in his heart, and the gall of disappointment at his cankered soul—a waif of humanity, who had been tossed upon the sea of life, and fretted by its angry waves. Perhaps he had his excuse, so let us pity and forgive him. But what shall we say of those who, in the spring time of youth and hope, make gay sport of venerable associations, and vote Christmas a bore? In the pride of knowledge which has come upon us, the rising generation is strongly disposed to this sort of cynicism. It was but the other day that I heard a young scribe (and pharisee) exclaim: ‘Christmas has been overdone—“merry Christmas,” “jolly Christmas,” “festive season,” and all that sort of thing, is stale now-a-days. I shall go in and write Christmas

down.’ He who said this was young—very young—about three-and-twenty, I should say. He will think differently by-and-by. The ardent youth of his age sees all the journey of life before him, and is eager to press on; but in a little time he will come to a mile-stone on the road, where he will rest and look back wistfully over the track which he may never tread again. He will then count his years, and think how few remain to him. He will say, ‘Christmas comes but once a year, and the span of man’s life is threescore and ten.’ Seventy happy days under the mistletoe at the most! How he will cling to his Christmas days then, and grapple with them to make them stay! Alas! that nothing but experience can teach this lesson—that we must lose half our joys before we learn to prize them!

If any thoughtless youth should feel inclined to laugh at my grave looks and serious words, I will sing to him the song composed by Michael Angelo Titmarsh for Wamba the Jester:—

Hot pretty page with dimpled chin,
That never has known the barber's shear,
All your aim is woman to win,
This is the way that boys begin;
Wait till you come to forty year.'

I, who write this, have not yet
come to forty year, yet will I not
open my window and shout to those
waits to be gone for noisy vaga-

the teaching of Mr. George Cruik-
shank and the statistics of the Post-
office savings bank. On my own
particular grounds, I rejoice to see
him making provision for a com-
fortable Christmas dinner. When I
view him sober in his shirt-sleeves,
carrying that goose home from the
baker's on Christmas Day, I shall be

bonds, who disturb my rest and
make night hideous; nor yet will I
let my imagination rest upon what
is probably the fact, that the three
minstrels have spent the whole wage
of pious hymn-singing in wassail.
Do I shut my heart to the lesson of
the preacher, because I may suspect
that he takes more port wine than
is good for him? No; I will lie
and listen to the waits, and let my
thoughts wander to the plains where
the burden of that song first broke
upon human ears, to find an echo of
gladness through all generations.

Christmas comes but once a year,
so I will even be indulgent to that
roysterer who is going home from
his goose club with his Christmas
prize. The way in which he is car-
rying his goose tells me that he is
not in a condition to receive a lec-
ture, else I might prove to him that
he has paid for that bird three times
as much as it is worth. Every time
he has gone to the public-house to
pay his instalment of sixpence to
the goose club he has spent another
sixpence in drink—to-night a good
deal more, evidently. In this re-
spect, I must hand Jones over to

in a position to admire him at all
points.

Christmas characters crowd upon
us fast. Here is Paterfamilias, with
large heart and capacious pockets,
bringing love and toys for the chil-

dren. His delight, as he drags forth
the 'presents' one by one, is as great
as, ay greater, than theirs. Pater-
familias has come to forty year, and
knows how precious are all brief

periods of innocent festival and happy domestic reunion. Who has such a rich source of pleasure on Christmas Day as papa, with all his boys and girls around him? He has his own happiness and theirs also, and the future is all bright with hopes to crown Christmas days to come. Ten years ago I was privileged to take my Christmas dinner with a nonagenarian. His grown-up sons and daughters were all about him: they were the men and women, he was the child; and they set him up in his chair, and helped him to everything he wanted, and patted him lovingly, as he had helped and patted them when *they* were children. He had his reward on that his last Christmas Day; for loving hands guided him, and loving lips kissed him, as he bade us all good-night, thanking God that he had been as happy that day as he had ever been any day of his long life.

I am coming to a most important Christmas character, who, I fear, is not considered so much as she ought to be—I mean the cook, who boils

give the cook half a crown, to enable her to enjoy her dinner on New Year's Day with her family, when she gets a well-earned holiday. I don't know how a cook can be happy on Christmas Day, except in the consciousness that she has done the turkey to a turn, and has not allowed the plum-pudding to stick to the bottom of the pot; and perhaps it is better to go to bed with a clear conscience than with an indigestion.

'Clean your doorstep, sir!' Nothing but Christmas custom could warrant such an impertinent proposal, seeing that snow has gone out of fashion, with many other jolly accompaniments of the season, and my doorstep no more wants cleaning than my patent-leather boots want polishing.

'Go away, you young scamp. No, stop—the railway porter, and the postman, and the newsboy will be here presently, dancing expectantly on my step for their several Christmas boxes, and then you may come and sweep off their marks.'

the turkey, and roasts the beef, and makes the plum-pudding. I suspect that, what with the steam of pots and kettles and the tasting of sauces, she has not much relish for her dinner when it comes down from the regions above with an unappetizing chill upon it. The cook is a martyr at the stake, or rather I should say the spit. I would therefore advise all Christmas guests to

Hamper, containing goose, hare, jar of mincemeat, half a dozen bottles of elder wine, &c., from Uncle Fozzle. Don't cost me a farthing; so I must open my heart and give the porter a shilling. Porter trips off the step very much 'up' in his spirits, and hies him home to Terminus Cottages, diffusing an odour of corduroy in the bracing Christmas air, to dine off tops of the ribs and

FOUR PUBLIC CHARACTERS IN PRIVATE LIFE.

THE CLOWN.

THE PANTALOON.

THE HARLEQUIN.

THE COLUMBINE.

"LOOK UP" THE COSTUME AND PREPARE FOR "BOXING NIGHT."

Drawn by William M'Connell.

[See "Christmas Characters."

greens, washed down with four-penny. How I envy him his appetite! Give me that appetite and

that power of digesting gristle, and I will be content, for this day at least, to wear corduroy and carry hampers.

Oh yes, Mr. Postman, I have been well aware why you have been so civil of late—why you have always touched your cap when you met me, and why you have taken so much trouble about my newspapers. Well, there is half a crown for you. I love you, for you bring me invitations to dinner, and orders for the play, and cheques from the Editor of 'London Society,' and have never yet appropriated one of them. I do not know sweeter music than your rat-tat when you bring me a cheque, so you are welcome to your small percentage; and I am glad there is only one delivery to-day, that you may have the afternoon to your beef and pudding in the bosom of your family.

Tom, and Jack, and Harry, at Dr. Birch's academy, have been looking forward to Christmas as a time of holiday. Here is one who has been looking forward to Christmas, quite as anxiously, as a time of work—the Clown. For many weeks past he has been counting the days to the golden hour when he would bound upon the stage in his spotted shirt and puff breeches, and salute the

audience with 'Here we are!' See, he has bloomed into magnificence on the strength of it, and in his braided hat and lappeted coat, with velvet cuffs and collar, brings back a memory of the Duke of Brunswick. Certainly the Duke never sported so great a length of watch-chain, or such large diamonds, though as to 'carats' and 'water' they may have been superior. You would think that so fine a gentleman would disdain to wear those calico puff pantaloons—'trucks' he calls them—which he is inspecting with so much interest. But no—those 'trucks' weigh heavy on his mind just now, and Mr. May, of Bow Street, will have a sad time of it until they are made all right, and exhibit sufficient bagginess behind. And here come his companions, Pantaloon, Harlequin, and Columbine. Ah! what a glorious time Christmas is to them! The crowd at the gallery door on Boxing Night will not be more impatient for the rising of the curtain than they; for with the rising of that curtain will begin a period of constant employment and regular pay, things to which these honest artistes have been strangers, may be, for many months. Christmas Day has its pleasures to these four worthies, but they are the pleasures of expectancy. There is not much time for cooking or thought of eating in the homes of Clown, Pantaloon, Harlequin, and Columbine on Christmas Day—even if there were anything to cook. They are all too much occupied in fitting on their dresses and trying their joints. They will be fed when they stand in a pyramid under the red fire; and the 'bravos' and the clapping of hands will be more satisfying to them than any roast beef, and sweeter than any plum-pudding.

To the eyes that look out from an honest and cheerful heart these Christmas Characters will always come as a vision of pleasure and delight. He to whom they come as nought else stands in need of our prayers.

A. H.

CHRISTMAS WITH SIR LANCELOT;

OR,

GEORGE TRESHAM'S THREE CHRISTMAS DAYS.

(ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE H. THOMAS.)

WE never could make out why, but so it was.—He was never demonstrative. George Tresham was rather a quiet, reserved kind of man, who smiled rarely and never laughed, but who talked on ordinary topics and discussed books, and theatres, and people with a keen shrewdness and a touch of cynicism certainly, but still openly and unreservedly. My first acquaintance with him was when we were both at Oxford, but we did not get on very closely there. Tresham was a reading man (he took a double first), and he did not like my set; said they were ribald and fast, reproached them as ne'er-do-weels, and warned me against a continuance of their society. I paid little heed to him; but he was right, as it proved. I spent all my capital, and when it came to the last, and I was compelled to strike my colours, my friend the Viscount, who was to get me a living so soon as I was ordained, and all the rest who had drunk my wine and borrowed my money and lived at my expense, deserted me *en masse*, and I was compelled to quit college without taking my degree, and to start to Australia with 500*l.* given me by my godfather to commence sheep-farming. No matter to record here the weary time of desperate dreary work, the loneliness, the anxiety, the actual danger of starvation, the long rides, the conflicts with the natives and the bushrangers, the awful homesickness coming upon one in one's solitude: suffice it to say that I struggled through ten years of it, that Providence aided me throughout, and that I returned with a fortune gained by my own labour, larger, far larger, than I had ever dreamed to have made in England. No need to tell here of my falling in love with old Sir Charles Maitland's daughter, Bella Maitland, a country toast and a flirt of flirts, who was reported to be engaged to Earl Flood-

escent, the lord-lieutenant, and who gave up all her flirtations, and trickeries, and intentions of high estate, to become my wife and share my lot. Not that it was a bad lot; Escott Towers is reckoned as good a house as there is in Sussex, and when I married, I took a snug little house in Curzon Street, which we inhabited during the London season.

It was in our first year in Curzon Street that I met Tresham again. I was at Tattersall's one sale day looking after a brougham-horse for Bella, for my old bush-farming knowledge held to me, and I would sooner have bought a horse on my own judgment than on that of any London dealer; and while going through the stalls, catalogue in hand, I came upon a tall, grave, gentlemanly man, who was examining a stiff-built, weight-carrying cob, and who raised his eyes from the horse, and looked me full in the face with an air of blank astonishment, a little relieved by pleasure.

'You are Frank Maldon?' he asked.

I answered to my name, and then, with a sudden recollection, called out, 'And you, George Tresham!'

Tresham it was. He told me that he was settled in London, in the Temple, that he had no profession, his private fortune and his college fellowship bringing him together ample income for his wants, and that he was glad to see me again. He had heard of me from mutual friends as being married and settled, and found that the early wildness, of which he had been perhaps too troublesome a monitor, had sobered down into healthy quiet and domestic happiness. I was unfeignedly glad to see him again, and I told him that he must come and see his quondam fast young friend in his quality of Benedict.

He promised, and he came. As I imagined, he and Bella struck up a

tremendous friendship, and as he and I seemed to renew all our old likings as though we had never been separated, there were but very few days which did not find George Tresham dining or calling in Curzon Street. I found that during his sojourn in London he had taken to literature, and that certain brilliant, scholarly, though always caustic articles, published in a leading Review, had brought him into communication with some of our leading literary men, by whom he was treated with a deference and distinction which his own natural high bearing and independence of spirit did not decrease; and occasionally at his chambers I would meet some of the best-known professors of literature and art.

But with all this, Tresham was anything but a happy man. There was a gloomy reserve about him always superincumbent, blown away sometimes by the bursts of jovial gaiety with which he surrounded himself; at others, dissolved in the quiet pleasantness of cheerful society such as he met at our house. But even then, when the party was most select and most homelike, I have seen him look round the merry circle gathered round the fire, and silently shudder as though some old recollection lay heavy at his heart.

And not I alone. Women always notice this kind of thing more than men, and think much more of them. Bella, who had become quite attached to Tresham, constantly spoke to me about his melancholy, and his absent fits, and his preoccupied manners, and his general shortcomings in society, all of which she had arranged in a long and doleful catalogue.

'Isn't it a pity, Frank?' she would say, 'when he's so nice and so clever, and puts everything in such a nice light. I'm sure your fine friend Mr. Cawker, whom you brought from the club on Wednesday, and whose witty sayings you're always quoting, had to "shut up," as you call it, very quickly when Mr. Tresham answered his silly witticism about women's talk. Oh, what can make him so melancholy?

I'm sure he must have had a love affair.'

'That's just the way with you women,' I replied; 'you're so utterly vain, and egotistical, and self-satisfied, that you think no man can be unhappy without your cruelty is the cause. I deny that Tresham is unhappy; he's a little dull sometimes, certainly, but that probably arises from dyspepsia or something of that sort.'

Bella declared that this solution of the question was 'horribly low' and unromantic, and that it was plain to her that Mr. Tresham had 'something on his mind.'

This colloquy, varying a little in detail, but always maintaining the same leading points, ending with the same result, had been maintained many times between my wife and myself both in Curzon Street and at Escott Towers whither we retreated after the season, and where Tresham came down among our other visitors for the shooting. A capital companion he was in a country-house, always suggestive of something to do; a good shot without being perpetually boring to be in the stubble; a good rider without those allusions to the stable so perpetually studding the talk of horsey men; a good hand at a pic-nic without the constant flow of vapidities of the agreeable rattle; and a pleasant guide over an old castle or a ruined abbey without the dreary information of the archaeological bore or the spurious enthusiasm of the amateur poet. With all the visitors at the Towers he became a special favourite, while the grooms and gamekeepers actually idolized him, such an adept was he in those acts most particularly coming home to them, and so liberal to their position.

Time passed, and, to our delight, Tresham outstayed all our other visitors. He had some literary work on hand which absorbed most of his mornings, and in the afternoon he was always ready to ride, or drive, or accommodate himself to the will and pleasure of the majority. But our number declined one by one, and when the day for the last family-fitting was named, Tresham came into my study one morning as I sat

looking through my newly-arrived letters, and announced his proximate departure.

'Not a bit of it, George,' I said, promptly; 'here you are, old fellow, and here you'll stay. It's now the beginning of November; you've plenty of work to do. You say you like your quarters, and in them you'll remain till after Christmas. We are to have a grand gathering at Christmas time, and I look to you to help in keeping up the festivity of the season.'

He shuddered as I spoke, and said, 'No, old friend, no, thanks; at that time I must be in town.'

'What!' I replied, 'to spend your Christmas in your dull chambers by yourself, without a soul to speak to or to exchange sympathies with, while we shall have a merry household? Why, George, if you do this, I shall almost look upon it as a personal affront, and I know Bella will be horribly disappointed.'

'God bless you and her too!' Tresham exclaimed, fervently; 'the kindness shown to me by both of you since your return has shed a new lustre on my life, and since I have had you to come to, I have been a different man. But you must have noticed that I have not what people call "good spirits," and that occasionally I am dull and I fear morose.'

'Dull, George, perhaps, but never morose,' I replied; 'a little dull now and then; indeed, Bella—'

'Ah! she noticed it, I know,' said Tresham, interrupting; 'I have often seen her looking wonderingly at my gloomy expression and my knit brows, and I have endeavoured then and there to shake it off, but it *will* cling to me.'

'What is it, may I ask, George?'

'To explain, would involve a long story, Frank, and not a particularly pleasant one for me. However, you're entitled to my confidence, and I've half a dozen times been upon the point of telling you, as I think perhaps I should be a little better for the sympathy which I know you'd give me. So, to begin with—it's a woman!'

'Bella thought so!' I exclaimed, 'and——'

'I knew she had guessed so much

of my mystery; but she can have little idea how blank and dreary my life is. Well, you've finished your letters, and have an hour to spare before we go out riding, so I may as well tell you my story as briefly as possible.

'It must have been almost before you left Oxford in that abrupt manner—at least, it is nearly fourteen years ago—that I went to spend Christmas with my old godfather, Sir Lancelot Bellew, who lived in a glorious old hall in the middle of Yorkshire, and kept up his estate in such style as remains with few baronets now-a-days. I arrived on Christmas Eve, just in time for dinner; and as I was dressing, the cheery old host rapped at my door, and called out in jolly tones, "Just in time, Frank, my dear boy! brought a good appetite, I hope! put on your lightest boots, and your lightest heart, for we have the great hall cleared for Sir Roger de Coverley at nine, and there'll be *such* a mistletoe bush somewhere at hand!" When I came into the drawing-room, I found the house was full of visitors, young and old, rich and poor, gentle and simple, all gathered together round Sir Lancelot at Christmas-time, to the old man's intense joy. The dinner was capital; but I noticed that throughout it the host was somewhat fidgety and expectant, and the cloth was no sooner off the table, than he called the butler, and ordered him to "send Miss Maud here at once." After a lapse of three minutes, there bounded into the room a little girl of about seven or eight years old, the loveliest I ever saw. She had bright blue trusting eyes, long fair hair, floating in curls over her rounded shoulders, and the prettiest hands and feet possible. This was Maud Bellew, Sir Lancelot's granddaughter, and the idol of the old man's heart. Her mother had run away from home with a penniless curate, and had died, unforgiven by her father, at the Cape. Her husband soon followed her to the grave, and little Maud was left to the care of the Dutch boers on the farm which the poor clergyman had taken. But old Sir Lancelot, who long had chewed

the bitter cud of his pride in silence and heartburning love, gave way. He sent for the child to England, had her at his home, and adopted her as his own, lavishing on her all that great wealth of affection which had remained stored up since his daughter's flight. She was the sunshine of the place, and the old man seemed never thoroughly happy when she was out of his sight. The title and the estates would go to his nephew, an archæological gentleman, for whom genial old Sir Lancelot had a great contempt; but a private purse was being made up for Maud, and added to whenever there was opportunity.

'It was a pretty sight to see this lovely child sitting on the old man's knee, and twining her arms round his neck, like some thin sprig of eglantine encircling a sturdy old oak, and it was a prettier still to see them together afterwards in the great hall; for there was no mistake about the manner in which Christmas was kept at Bellew Hall. Across the dogs of the enormous deep embrasures of fireplaces, lay huge Yule logs, emitting genial warmth and grateful smell, and sputtering and cracking as though they too enjoyed the season and expressed themselves as best they might. All the furniture and lumber had been cleared out to leave a large space for dancing; a band of "musicianers," as the country people called them had been laid on; the lights shone bravely, and were reflected from the old polished oak-wainscoting. Here and there loomed darkly from the walls a trophy of stags' antlers, hunting-whips, otter-spears and rifles, and a panoply of old armour, long unused and rusted, but telling in many dents and bruises, and dark indelible stains here and there, of hard-fought battle-fields. Punctually at nine o'clock the fiddlers struck up the opening notes of Sir Roger, and the dance began. There was no escape, all must foot it; young and old; people who declared their dancing-days were over, and young boys fresh from school, who looked upon anything but a waltz as slow—all were compelled to dance Sir Roger. Of course Maud

was her grandfather's partner, and opened the ball. To this day I can see that scene—see her fairy form flying up the dance to meet Sir Lancelot, her long hair floating over her shoulders, her bright eyes glowing with pleasure, her tiny feet beating time to the music: can see the old gentleman tripping to meet her, his grave, old-fashioned courtesy battling with his overflowing happiness, and custom restraining his steps which innate feeling would have made reckless. Everybody looked on with delight, women and men admiring heartily, and even the young gentlemen from school condescending to express their opinion that "she was a nice little gyurl;" and when, at the last time, instead of merely giving her partner both her hands, she threw her arms round her grandfather's neck and nestled up into his embrace, we could restrain ourselves no longer, and a murmur of delight rang through the hall.

'That was the first time I saw Maud Bellew, and ten years elapsed before I set eyes upon her again. Our meeting was in the same house at the same time of year, but under what different circumstances! Old Sir Lancelot lay dead, and I had come down to attend the funeral and to see to affairs, for the new baronet was away in Rome, and not expected back for months. I found Maud a lovely girl of eighteen, tall, but with a rounded figure, and retaining all her childish beauty of face. I was at the hall for three weeks, and during that time we were constantly together, she assisting me in going through the papers and winding up her poor grandfather's affairs, and doing all with a sweetness of manner which grew upon me daily, and left me more and more hopelessly wounded at each evening's close. At last I took courage to speak, and asked her to become my wife.

'She started, blushed deeply, and the tears came into her eyes, as she said, "Oh, then you have not heard?"

'Not heard what?' I asked hurriedly.

'That I am engaged to be married!'

'Who—who is the fortunate gentleman?' I asked, like a brute, with my temper prompting me to sneer.

'“Oh, don't be angry, Mr. Tresham!” said the poor child. “You do not know how I—how I feel all your kindness, and how grateful I am to you; but it was poor grandpapa's dearest wish that I should marry Mr. Mark Darrell, who lives at the Chace, and who has just inherited his father's property. Poor grandpapa always wanted me to be rich, and said he could not save enough for me out of his income—” and her tears flowed freely.

'And do you love Mr. Darrell, Maud?' I asked, taking her hand.

'“I—I . promised grandpapa I would,” was her reply, with downcast eyes.

'I left her, after she had pledged her word to write to me at any time when she might require my advice or assistance, and I went back to town, and settled down in my dreary, black chambers, with a weight at my heart which has never left it since. I loved that girl then, Frank, with all my soul: with all my soul I love her now!

'But what became of her, George?' I asked; 'did she marry this Darrell?'

'She did! He was a loose, stupid sportsman, and nothing more. I heard of him as a reckless gambler on the turf and at the table; of her as a brokenhearted and neglected wife—but I heard nothing from her. Two years after Sir Lancelot's death, I was sitting, on the Christmas Eve, in my chambers: I had been hard at work, and had just laid down my pen and crossed the room to my bookshelves, when I heard a low knock at the outer wall. I opened the door at once and saw a female figure miserably clad, standing close outside. She pronounced my name, and on the instant at the sound of her voice my memory leaped back ten years, and I knew that Maud stood before me. It was she! but when I led her into the room I never saw any one so changed. Her glorious colour was gone, the light had faded out of her blue eyes and left them dull and spiritless, her face was haggard, her hand cold and thin—her whole appearance wretch-

ed. I brought her into the room and made her swallow a little hot wine and water, for she was nearly fainting with hunger and cold; and after a little time she briefly sketched her story. Her husband, after gambling away his own fortune and the 5,000*l.* which Maud had inherited from her grandfather, had come to London with the vain hope of retrieving his position by some grand *coup* either on the turf or at the gambling-houses, had lost every shilling, and pawned every article of his wife's jewellery and even clothing, and that evening had been arrested and taken to prison. Maud said she had several times thought of applying to me, but did not like doing so through shame and pride; but when the arrest came she told her husband she should seek me out, and had spent the whole evening in hunting for my chambers.

'There's not much need to bore you with the rest of the story, Frank. I took Maud to her wretched lodging, and the next day brought her husband out of the Bench, penitent, and promising good for the future. I saw him then for the first time, and saw how utterly unsuited he was in every way to Maud; but she declared that her duty in life lay in remaining with him; and when, after a little time, I got him a situation as correspondent at San Francisco to a house of business in which I am interested, his wife sailed with him. I have heard from them twice or thrice during the two years they have been away. Maud is stated to have quite recovered her good looks, and his husband to have settled down into steadiness—in which he is perhaps somewhat influenced by the state of his health, which his previous excesses impaired. But I have never got over my love for Maud; I never loved any one before or since, and I think always of Christmas as the season at which I have thrice seen her, and I like to sit at that season and grizzle by myself.'

I shook old George by the hand, and told him that I entered into all his feelings; but that he could scarcely do any good by cherishing his old reminiscences, and that he

would be much better by our Christmas fireside. But he shook his head, and the horses being announced, our conversation ended. Three days after, on my return from a ride to the market-town nearest to Escott Towers, whither I had been on business, the butler met me in the hall with a letter—'left by Mr. Tresham,' he said, 'as he started.'

'Started!' I exclaimed; 'what, do you mean to say he's gone?'

'Yes, sir,' said Howley; 'got a telegram at noon, sir; started by the 1:30 express to London, sir.'

I opened George's note. This was all it said—

'DEAR FRANK,—Just received some important news. Can't say what, even to you. Shall be busy about a month, when will let you know. No use your writing to me until you hear. Kindest to Madam,

'Always,
'G. T.'

I knew there was no use in bothering him, and so remained quiet. Not a word did I hear. We invited our guests for Christmas and filled our house. The weather was eminently seasonable—hard frosts, black stony frosts, never yielding one jot to the bright sun which daily came to visit the landscape. There was some capital snipe-shooting near us, and the lake in the grounds gave us splendid skating: we had a very jolly set of people with us, and all seemed enjoying themselves immensely. Only I thought sometimes of George Tresham, and wondered what he was doing; and Bella would occasionally sigh after the friend on

whom the mystery of a fruitless love lay so heavily.

Christmas Eve came, and the cold was intense. We had had a long morning's duck-shooting, and after luncheon had been sleighing the ladies on the lake in some impromptu sledges, devised after my idea by the village carpenter. The dark came on early with a thick, rimy fog, and we adjourned home. I was in my dressing-room when the lodge bell pealed out with a tremendous clang, and presently I heard the noise of wheels on the hard-frozen carriage sweep. I opened my dressing-room door and listened. I heard footsteps on the stairs—footsteps of two people—one heavy one light, one impatient one faltering, one masculine one feminine. A touch on my shoulder, a grasp of my hand—Tresham's voice in my ear, 'Frank, old boy! we've come to spend Christmas with you'—pointing to a tall lady wrapped in fur—'Frank, my dear old friend—my wife!' a warm hand-clasp from the lady. I have only sense enough to say 'George—is it?'—he finishes the sentence for me by saying, 'Yes, Frank, this was—Maud Bellow!'

While Bella was hugging Mrs. Tresham, and showing her to her room, George told me briefly that the telegram he had received while on his former visit told him of Darrell's death, and Maud's return to England. That he had seen her, so soon as she arrived, and bit by bit had learned that her heart had been his from the first, that they had been married by special license, and had come at once to us, to keep the happiest Christmas George Tresham had ever yet spent.



A CHRISTMAS TREE PARTY.

and Mrs. West request the pleasure of Captain and Mrs. Keating and family's company on Tuesday, the 6th of January, at 9 P.M.'

Such, headed by a most elaborate monogram, were the contents of a scented cream-coloured note which I extracted from the post-bag one morning in December, and which my husband to all assembled at the breakfast-table. Our county is not famous for the excitement of my family on the receipt of the note being generally immense. Opinions were strongly expressed on the nature of the proposed amusement; every form of evening entertainment, from a fancy ball to a tea-party in which weak tea and weaker conversation would be dispensed *ad libitum* to the guests, being successively discussed and successively rejected. With an inward shudder at the thought of driving five Irish miles and back on a winter's night, on the *chance* of receiving a cup of weak tea, and the *certainly* of influenza, I proposed that the invitation should be refused with thanks. This counsel, which was certainly wise, was received with such strong marks of disapprobation by the younger members of the family, and created such a cry of dismay, that at last, though not without strong misgivings, I consented to be sacrificed, a most reluctant victim, at the shrine of Pleasure. My consent, however, was qualified.

Under no circumstances would I accompany my children to a tea-party, *pur et simple*. Unless the object of the evening assemblage was thoroughly well defined, and promised to repay the exertion of a winter night's drive, I would not rashly promise to be of the party.

The subject of dress was next rather prematurely brought on the *tapis* by the ladies of the family. My eldest daughter, who had firmly settled in her own mind (the wish, we all know, is father to the thought), against all probabilities, that the affair would turn out to be a fancy ball, insisted that I should appear as a Zulu chief—blankets and a coronet of feathers being of that simple nature easily to be procured, even in a remote country place, and being certain to produce a unique and picturesque effect. My youngest child, Adolphus, a precocious boy of four, and, I need hardly say, his mother's darling, having conceived the idea that the party was to be composed of youths of his own age, at once proclaimed that he intended to go, very much to his elders' disgust.

It was finally determined that I should try and solve the great problems of the nature of the entertainment, and of the required dress, by riding over to Abbeyvale, my friends the Wests' residence, and judiciously there angle for the desired information. This project I carried into effect that very afternoon. On my arrival at the imposing red-brick Elizabethan mansion, which, enthroned on its double row of terraces,

glowed 'celestial rosy red' in the rays of the descending sun, I could not refrain an involuntary shudder at the possible prospect of ascending those same terraces in a snow-storm, with inverted umbrella. However, the weather was at present so mild, that, after all, the dreaded catastrophe *might* not occur, although buds at Christmas are well known to be the most delusive of hypocrites in their promises. Balancing thus, in my own mind, the weather probabilities, I rang at the glass door. A tall individual in very gorgeous cherry-coloured shorts, and calves specially fattened up for the Christmas festivities, very soon admitted me into the *sanclorum* of Mrs. West, where I found the eldest daughter of the house busily engaged at some feminine handiwork of that utter uselessness which characterizes articles at bazaars and Christmas trees in the aggregate. At once grasping at the idea, by a happy impulse, I exclaimed, blandly smiling, 'Oh! Miss West, how very kind it is of you to think of giving a Christmas tree!' Had a bombshell suddenly exploded at her feet, my young friend could not have been more startled, and losing her presence of mind, acknowledged the fact. I was then called upon to admire some many-coloured paper flowers, which I was informed were 'Parisian roses,' and which were, in truth, miracles of art. Mrs. West here entered, and on finding that I was possessed of the secret, proceeded to dilate at great length on the programme of the intended festivities on the 6th; and I was not sorry to find that some handsome as well as useful articles were to be included among the presents. Not that I hoped to become the happy owner of any of them, when I heard that the articles were to be ticketed and drawn for by corresponding numbers from a bag—my luck in such affairs generally consisting in finding myself the possessor of a shrivelled apple or an elderly orange. But I am a father, and rejoiced at the prospect of my luckier children providing themselves with valuables gratis, to say nothing of the addenda of a promised champagne

supper, in which my friend West's clever *chef* would cover himself with glory, I felt convinced.

Having thus successfully accomplished my mission, at least in my own estimation, I made my way homewards. My eldest daughter was, I think, a little put out at having to relinquish her favourite idea of a fancy ball; but any disappointment she may have felt was as nothing compared to the immense joy and triumph of Adolphus, at hearing that he had been specially invited by Mrs. West. We were all bound to go; and need I say, to amuse ourselves, as a matter of course.

As the eventful day drew near, we were kept in great suspense by the barometer. The mercury having suddenly fallen to 'change,' did not seem to relish its position there, but fell lower and lower, and was guilty of eccentricities innumerable. On the morning of the 5th, our uncertainties were put an end to by awakening to find the country covered with a white tablecloth of snow, and more softly, but most determinately, falling.

But it is well to take a cheery view of matters; at least so seemed to think the younger members of my family, who assured me at breakfast that snow was just the one thing that was wanting to complete the success of a Christmas party; more especially as fireworks, which, got up regardless of expense, were to form part of the programme of the evening's amusement, are never seen to such advantage as in snowy weather. 'Perhaps,' I remarked dubiously, 'but there might be such a thing as being snowed up on our way to Abbeyvale—or our drive there might be pleasingly diversified by missing the road, and finding a boghole.' The road to Abbeyvale, I must premise, ran through a bog, and was perfectly unprotected by any fence from the deep dykes by which it was bordered; and you may conceive, my reader, that there would be at least excitement in driving over such a road on a night when snow would render bog, road, and dykes one undistinguishable mass.

However, there was still some

thirty hours for the snow to cease, and summer weather to begin, and the latter contingency the young people seemed to think highly probable. On the morning of the 6th, my children were obliged to confess that summer had not come; in fact, the thermometer was nearly at zero, the cold intense, and the wind, which had risen, whirled the snow into drifts which to my mind presented rather a problem for wheels. The proposition of my second son, the mechanical genius of the family, that our closed carriage, a new one fresh from London, should be taken off its wheels and placed on hastily extemporized runners, I at once sternly negatived; and heartily congratulated myself on having, the moment the thermometer indicated frost, ordered post horses from the neighbouring town, in spite of the remonstrances of my wife, who was very severe on the fact that our own horses were never available when work was to be done.

All that day the snow fell unweariedly, uninterruptedly—all—even the most sanguine hopes of a clearing were shattered to pieces when dusk came on, and found the snow as busy as ever. I tried to reconcile my children to their inevitable disappointment, as even the most zealous of Irish post-horse keepers would hardly, I imagined, send his horses out on such a night. For my own part, I must confess, that secret joy welled unbidden in my heart, and that a feeling of relief predominated at the prospect of the almost unexpected release from the, to me, very problematical pleasures attending a drive through a snow-drift. At seven P.M. (dinner having been earlier than usual that we might be prepared for all eventualities) I ensconced myself in a thoroughly comfortable arm-chair, heightened my reading-lamp, and set myself to enjoy the last number of 'London Society,' in the cheery company of a blazing fire.

Imagine my feelings, sympathetic reader, if you can, at my visions of comfort being rudely dispelled in about five minutes by my second son's rushing in that dreadfully impetuous way natural to schoolboys,

into the room, and loudly proclaiming that the 'horses had come, and I must at *once* go and dress.' Apparently, though thunderstruck with dismay, I submitted in silence, and having dismissed my son to his toilet, and thus got *him* out of the way, I descended to the lower regions, for a surreptitious colloquy with the postboy, on the state of the roads. 'By dad thin, yer honour, they're jist as slippy as *grace*, and the ice bates Banagher,' was not very consolatory, the more so as I could not get him to say they were positively impracticable. A '*gcs-soon*' runner, with a lantern, was necessary, it appeared, to accompany us, however, and we were to trust unlimitedly to our good star. Very gloomy I went to dress—but it was an inexorable necessity. I should have been considered a monster of unkindness had I not been willing to immolate myself for my family's sake. Behold us then packed tightly in and on the carriage—under the care of Paddy, the postilion, whom I fervently *hoped* was sober; but his attitudes on horseback were, to say the least, suspicious. Our approach was confessedly 'a mighty dangerous place,' (indeed, it was one of the steepest hills in the country,) therefore the assistance of all our retainers (including the cook, who appeared on the scene with an armful of shoes to be thrown consecutively after us 'for luck,') was called into requisition. Amidst a perfect Babel of advices, consolations, exhortations, shrieks, cursings, and blessings—and the ecstatic delight of the children, we finally reached the gate in safety; plunged triumphantly through a snow-drift there, and found ourselves on the public road. The ever vigilant eyes of my children at once discovered the fact that vehicles (*they* said *carriages*—I supposed *carts*) had recently passed and trodden a path for us. This, could it be considered as certain that the vehicles were *carriages*, would have dispelled one of the objects of my deep solicitude, namely, that on our arrival we should find ourselves the only guests at the Wests' hospitable mansion. Slow, and I am happy to be able to add,

sure, became meanwhile our motto. Progression at a pace quicker than a walk was mostly impracticable; but somehow or other we managed to surmount all difficulties, and in spite of various stoppages, finally got to Abbeyvale in safety. We were agreeably surprised to find, on our arrival there, that an elaborate covered way extended from the house to the gravel sweep, and very pretty was the vista that burst on our eyes as our carriage drew up. Greenhouse plants and flowering shrubs of every variety, decorated by different coloured lamps, formed banks on each side of the crimson carpeted footway; while from the arched roof, flags of many colours depended, decorated with Christmas devices. Within, the enormous Yule logs blazing in both the fireplaces of the entrance-hall formed a pleasing contrast to the cold out of doors. Here we were greeted by our jovial host, who had stationed himself there to receive the arriving guests, with a hearty welcome.

Having unswathed ourselves in an adjoining room, decorated with holly and ivy, we were ushered into the morning room, where Mrs. West, in all her bravery, stood, surrounded by all her guests. I felt, as I stood there, contemplating the many county families collected before me, that from henceforth my children could and would sing a never-ending song of triumph over the non-fulfilment of my prophecies of deserted rooms. In the meanwhile, the greetings over, we were all expectation for the grand climax. It came at last, when, finally—the intervening time being got through by the aid of tea, coffee, cakes, the meteorological observations so precious for conversational purposes, and the discussion of county affairs—the folding-doors between the room in which we were assembled and the drawing-room were thrown back, and the Christmas tree in all its glory burst upon us, and became at once the cynosure of all eyes. It was a stately silver fir, some sixteen or seventeen feet high; innumerable tapers of various colours illuminated the feathery branches, dependent from which hung the chief objects of

attraction in the children's eyes—namely, presents in endless variety.

And here, perhaps, we may digress a little for the benefit of those future givers of Christmas-tree parties, who imagine that the mere sight of a decorated fir-tree ought to furnish quite sufficient gratification to the elders of the party, and that fathers and mothers of families are quite beyond the pale of receiving gifts. Could those benighted persons have but seen the intense gratification that suffused itself over the faces of the parents present—not called forth by the vision of the tree in its large decorated tub, and the dolls and playthings floating from the branches, but at the sight of handsome presents of which they were to be the recipients, they would soon discover their error. Apples and oranges may be very nice things in their own way, but the digestive powers of their eaters require to be in their second or third lustre, when any pleasure is to be derived from discussing them. In this case things were so arranged that *all* received a lasting memento of the evening; and this judicious plan we strongly recommend to the consideration of all future Christmas-tree givers.

After some time had been spent in admiring the tree and its rich harvest of presents, our host commenced business by handing about a bag full of tickets, each of which bore a number corresponding with that on some present on the tree. And now commenced the exciting part of the evening's amusements. Lost in conjecture as to what it would fall to my fate to receive, I cast a scrutinizing glance at the tree. Could I be doomed—terrible thought!—to become the unhappy possessor of one of those scarcely decently-clothed gutta-percha babies, which it almost made me blush to see even a glimpse of, instead of a handsome inkstand on which I had set my heart? I am not lucky, and consequently was pretty sure to draw an unfortunate number. A happy inspiration seized me—I cruised round the tree on a voyage of discovery, to find out the number on my cherished inkstand. It was 66, and 66, sure enough, I discovered in

the possession of a little child near me, in the costume so happily described by a writer of the present day as consisting of 'bare legs, bustle, and cocked-tailed petticoats.' By judicious bribery, I succeeded in persuading him to exchange tickets, and then, at peace in my own mind, I calmly awaited my turn in the distribution of prizes, which occupied some time, as each recipient who considered himself unfortunate in the article received had many plausible excuses for endeavouring to effect an exchange; and I am sorry to say that one little child, who became the owner of an envied toy, was at once assaulted by an unruly cherub, and the coveted prize was obtained after a sharp passage-at-arms, in the course of which shattered relics were left on the battle-field.

At last 66 was called, and I stepped forward; not, however, to receive my cherished inkstand, with its endless conveniences for a study-table, but a hideous china monster, who nodded his head mockingly at me, as he was placed in my extended hand. The shock was terrible, and I at once objected to the leering member of the 'celestial' empire. Alas! in vain. The number on the inkstand was 99, and in my hurried progress round the tree I had not perceived that I only saw it in its *inverted* shape of 66. This was a terrible consummation to my fondly-cherished, and, as I had thought, also, well-grounded hopes; but there was no resource, and I was obliged to acquiesce; and I had the pang of seeing the inkstand and its belongings inexorably handed over to a stern matron, who was quite, too evidently, a utilitarian to be cajoled by any amount of 'soft sawder' to exchange it for a useless mandarin. My children had been more fortunate in obtaining the objects of their desires; Adolphus, in particular, revelled in the possession of a long-wished-for, terribly noisy drum, which I, however, privately, in my own mind, doomed to destruction on the first favourable opportunity. Much amusement was afforded by the incongruity of some of the presents to their recipients: thus the bishop of

the diocese, who was present, and whose youthful deeds of prowess on the moor and by the river-side, still furnish a fruitful topic for reminiscences and anecdote by the peasant's fireside, received a miniature fowling-piece; and Count G——, a German visitor to our county, whose long dishevelled locks hung wildly over his shoulders, received a 'pocket-comb and scissors,' all in one. My well-turned congratulations to my foreign friend on the possession of such useful toilet articles were still on my lips when we were summoned to witness the acting of some charades in an adjoining room, which was turned into an extemporized theatre for the occasion. Three words were acted with far above average amateur skill, but, as usual, were not all guessed by the audience; after which the sounds of a gong proclaimed the fact that supper was the next stage of the proceedings. The difficult operation of marshalling so large a company being at length concluded, we all progressed through the intervening apartments to the dining-room. There, on the tables where the supper was laid out, the delicate frosted silver foliage of the centre-pieces and épergnes vied with richly-tinted, natural leaves of the exotics from the stoves and greenhouses. The eye of the epicure could also dwell with pleasure upon the various *chefs-d'œuvre* of culinary art produced by my friend West's clever chef, which I was happy to perceive appeared to be thoroughly appreciated by an elderly gentleman, who, after hovering around the tables, glass in eye, for some time, beaming with delight, finally settled himself for good opposite a *pâté de fois gras*, which promised to repay his cautious foresight. For my own part, I found myself seated between two ladies, who took vastly different views of the whole evening's proceedings. While my friend on the left saw everything through rose-coloured glasses, and was delighted alike with the journey through the snow—'a most picturesque drive, which reminded her of happy days in Russia,' and the handsome ring she had received from the tree—my neighbour on the right objected, on

principle, to night drives in winter—and thoroughly reprobated the ‘useless extravagance’ displayed in the Christmas-tree presents; and, sorest point of all, dwelt with withering sarcasm on Mrs. West’s utter incapability for learning the proper precedence of her guests.

The supper was progressing towards its termination, when I was informed by a friend that it had been determined that a speech of thanks

should be made to our host for his handsome entertainment, on the part of the children, and that the onerous office had been unanimously given to me. Not being the least ambitious either of oratorical failures or successes, I begged to refuse the proffered honour, but finally yielded to the solicitations of my friend. The auspicious moment for expressing the infants’ gratitude for benefits received appeared to have arrived,

when a cessation of the clatter of knives and plates, accompanied by a lull in conversation, announced that the pangs of nature had been for the present satisfied, and I rose to my feet, but only to find myself confronted by my stout, elderly friend in front of the remains of the *pâté de fois gras*, who had apparently found the supper such a success in a culinary point of view that he wished to place on record his gratitude to the

donor. I at once gave way in favour of my friend opposite, who, after touching rather incoherently on various topics, at last allowed his feelings so entirely to overwhelm him that he became quite unintelligible, and subsided into his seat again amidst mingled cheers of laughter and derision. The speechifying was then brought to an abrupt conclusion by a notice that the fireworks were in progress, and the

company adjourned to the drawing-room to see this, the last stage of the evening's amusement.

For the next half-hour rockets, Catherine-wheels, &c., &c., delighted the beholders. At last a magnificent bouquet of many-coloured lights brought the pyrotechnic display to a close, and carriages began to be thought of. The difficult task of collecting my scattered flock of children now remained. As soon as I captured one, the rest eluded my grasp, and I began thoroughly to realize the truth of a saying frequently used by an old domestic servant of my own—namely, that it required the 'patience of Job, the strength of Samson, and the wisdom of Solomon' combined, to cope satisfactorily with children when their youthful minds are bent on the accomplishment of some desired project. At length, as other parents on the same errand collected and drew off their children, my task became easier; and Adolphus, the last of the missing ones, was finally victoriously driven from his ambush behind a curtain, just in time to prevent a private pyrotechnic display of his own, in which he was assisted by a kindred spirit, and to which the curtain would probably have fallen a victim. When we reached the entrance-hall, we found it filled by the departing guests in every variety of costume that could be supposed equal to all possible weather emergencies. Conspicuous amongst the crowd my neighbour at the supper-table appeared in a very striking Russian costume of fur, whose history she was relating in a very prolix way to Court G——, who, shivering before her in the thinnest of paletots, seemed fully to realize her remarks on the severity of the weather.

But what stops the outward stream of departing guests? Voices, too, in noisy vituperation, reach the ear: our host descends to ascertain the cause, and shortly returns, hot and excited, and requests me to use my influence with *my* servants, who, he informs me, are the cause of the disturbance. I hastened to the door, and the first object that met my horrorstricken gaze was the figure of our postilion, who stood, the

lantern in his hand dimly burning and all awry, smiling blandly at me as I advanced towards him. A glance satisfied me as to *his* condition. His coadjutor, 'the gossoon,' whom he had insisted on bringing (considerably to my dissatisfaction), had, it appeared, marked out, opposite the door, a sacred ring, into which no carriage was to intrude, and was busily employed in personally opposing the approach of all vehicles with a blackthorn stick. On further investigation I failed to descry our carriage, and requested an explanation from some of the other servants. It appeared that our precious retainers had met some convivial spirits in the public-house of the adjoining village to which they had betaken themselves, and were only returning from the scene of their dissipation, when, seeing lights and people, they had instinctively made their way to the crowd, their bewildered faculties causing them to imagine that a wake, or some such festive scene, was in progress, at which they felt themselves pre-eminently called upon to assist. As I turned to re-enter the house, I had the satisfaction of seeing 'gossoon' suddenly seized from behind by some of the Wests' people, and carried forcibly off the scene, while Paddy, the postilion, followed, feebly serpentine along. This was a pleasant position in which to find oneself, and I had to throw myself on the good nature of our host: if he could supply the places of our two incompetent drinkers by even one sober man, all might yet be well. This, happily, was easily accomplished; our posters, not being inebriated, were still available, and we departed, hoping our misfortunes had come to an end.

Vain expectation! After passing the approach-gates, we were left to our own resources for pioneering a road over the untrodden snow. For the first mile we proceeded without accident, and I was sinking into the repose that I felt I so well deserved, when, in descending Ballinagrattish-carnahey Hill, before reaching the bog, a sudden lurch forward, a plunge, a struggle, announced that one of the horses was down, and my

visions of dream-land were suddenly dispersed. My eldest son had to descend from the box, and I, from the interior of the carriage, however unwillingly, to the rescue, to the great detriment both of our tempers and dress-boots, and with infinite trouble to raise the animal on his legs again, who was fortunately, as our driver remarked, 'not a haporth the worse of his tumble.' Placing our trust in Providence, we commenced our journey afresh. The four or five consecutive hours' snow while we were at Abbeyvale, had, of course, effectually removed all our former tracks on the unfrequented road, and crossing the bog, where not a bush or tree was to be seen to mark our way, was perilous in the extreme. At last we came to a dead stop, and the driver requested to know if we were on the right road. A dreadful suspicion came into my mind. About half-way across the bog our road home diverged at an angle from the main road, and on questioning the driver, we found

that the turn had too evidently not been taken, and that we had been, for the last hour, progressing in an entirely wrong direction. There was nothing for it but to retrace our steps; and it was with the deepest feelings of gratitude that we at last found ourselves, at 5 A.M., on our own steps, intensely cold, certainly, but never did home appear so attractive. We had been almost given up for lost, and were just in time to stop a party that was about starting to rescue us from the perils of the bog, in which we were supposed to have been engulfed.

We found, subsequently, that our adventures returning home sank into insignificance compared with those of some of the other guests. Count G——, in particular, told me that to his dying day he should never forget the ditch in which he miserably spent some hours (until rescued by some Irish natives) on the morning he returned home from the Abbeyvale Christmas tree.

O.

ARTISTS' NOTES FROM CHOICE PICTURES.

Shakespeare's Twelfth Night.

IN the Olivia of the 'Twelfth Night,' Shakespeare has presented us with one of the most graceful of his many matchless pictures of womanhood; and, in painting the Garden Scene, Maclise has sought to give visible form to the loveliness of which Shakespeare has expressed the inner sense and secret purpose. The Lady Olivia's was, by the confession of one who felt herself supplanted by it, a face in which was 'beauty truly blent,' but now troubled by many contending feelings and emotions. To paint it truly was no easy task.

Maclise had painted many handsome faces before—he has painted many since. He began with those laughing, dark-eyed Irish lasses gathered together at Hallow E'en, of which you may any day see merry, barefooted, living examples in plenty about the mud cabins of the Wicklow mountains. He has continued them by the score in the prouder dames, whose bright eyes

rain influence at the Vow of the Peacock, Strongbow's Marriage, and many another scene of gaudy pagantry. But perhaps in none has his power been more pleasantly and unaffectedly shown than in the unpretending little picture from which these two charming heads are taken. It was painted in 1840, when the artist, though yet numbered among the young men—he was just nine-and-twenty—was in the full flush of success; a lion in May Fair, a newly-elected R.A.

Exquisite is the tact with which Shakespeare has drawn the Olivia of his comedy. Viola is one of the very gentlest and purest of Shakespeare's creations. Olivia is as true a lady, but with more of impulse. Her very melancholy is a little strained—has something of wilfulness in it—is cherished with almost demonstrative determination. Out of love to her dead brother she has abjured the sight and company of men. Nay,

the very sun shall not look upon her unveiled:—

'The element itself, till seven years' heat,
Shall not behold her face at ample view.'

Yet is the resolution given to the winds almost as soon as uttered. Though the Duke can gain no sign of favour, his handsome messenger has but to ask, and the veil is at once withdrawn. Still even when she is giving to her impulsiveness the wildest play, and where any other dramatist would have failed utterly, the great master of the human heart never suffers her to lose her hold of our esteem. Always is she noble, gentle, truehearted, lady-like; never uttering an unfeminine word, or seeming to breathe an unholy thought.

One might have wished to see how a painter like Maclise would contrast two such fair creatures as Olivia and Viola. He has preferred to place beside the sensitive Olivia that lighthearted madcap Maria—simply a rattling, heedless maiden, but with a sharp tongue, and jests in plenty at her fingers' ends, and, moreover, apt to use them—as the Clown tells us, 'in good faith *very* apt;' altogether 'as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria.' She has made a gull of poor Malvolio—of old 'sad and civil,' now 'sick of self-love,' 'turned heathen, a very renegado;' has enticed him into the garden, there to show himself before his mistress tricked out in yellow stockings and cross-gartered, kissing his silly hands, and smiling 'his face into more lines than are in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies.'

Maria, shading her face from the sun, and scarce hiding her merriment even from her mistress, is enjoying the jest without stint. As well she may: for by it she has not merely punished one she has for some time been longing to mortify, but won her a husband in bluff, roystering Sir Toby, who vows in her absence to 'marry the wench for this device, and ask no other dowry with her but such another jest;' and when he meets her afterwards protests to her, in his enthusiasm, that he will follow her 'to the gates of Tartar—thou most ex-

cellent devil of wit.' There we may leave him, in the charitable hope that he will not burn his fingers.

But before leaving Maria, we must note how happily the painter has marked the difference between the buoyant, cheery, mischievous cleverness of the maid and the refinement of style and sensitive delicacy of temperament of the mistress. You see at a glance that one is the perpetrator of the mischief: the sad, wondering, pitying face of the other tells as plainly that she is as innocent of the deception as the unlucky victim himself. And how happy a stroke is that of the painter's in making her turn, with a half-frightened expression, to place her hand mechanically on that of her attendant! Even the little dog opens wide his eyes in mute astonishment at Malvolio's fantastic folly, though he is too well bred a courtier to quit his mistress's side, or to express his surprise by a single bark at the varlet's presumption.

Maclise's picture is, in fact, a well-expressed and well-considered commentary on this passage of the poet, an admirable and suggestive dissertation on the personages, as well as a pleasant realization of the scene. It is the true expression of his own conception of the poet's meaning, and therefore valuable, whether it agree with your conception of it or not, as the careful utterance of an intelligent mind necessarily must be.

With a picture like this before us, there is a great temptation to say something of its technical qualities. But it would hardly be in place to do so here; and, after all, it is with the persons represented that the real interest lies.

'A great while ago the world began;

and ever since it began there have been Malvolios to smile, and kiss the hand, and go cross-gartered for heedless woman's sake; and Marias to befool and laugh at them; and Olivias to pity even when they could not love them; and, doubtless, Violas who never told their love, and found in the end their reward in their reticence. 'And thus the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges.'



From the Painting by D. Maclean, R.A.

TWELFTH NIGHT.

[See " Artists' Notes on Choice Pictures."

CHRISTMAS SMILES AND CHRISTMAS TEARS;

OR,

The Story of the Pantaloon's Daughter.

... ..



I AM a call-boy, and I have been a call-boy ever since I was ten. I am five-and-forty now, and getting old and grizzled, but still a call-boy, and I dare say I shall remain a call-boy to the end of my days. In my line we never grow to be men. It's always 'boy' to the last, if we were to live to be as old as Methuselah. It was the same with the postboys. They were nearly always little chaps, and in their caps and jackets looked just like juveniles. I have heard it was gin taken with their pap that did it in their case—I mean stopped their growth. In ours I think it's owing to the gas. I should say I have lived pretty nigh twenty years of my life by gaslight. I go to the theatre every night at six o'clock

and never leave until twelve, and most of the time I stand under the reflector on the first landing of the dressing-room staircase. It's monotonous kind of work to stand there night after night for so many hours, listening to the pieces that I know all by heart, and calling up stairs to the actors when they're wanted to go on. It's dry work, too; for the gas is very hot, and the dust comes up from the stage when they change the scenes. I have seen a good deal of life, though, from that landing; and I am sorry now that I did not begin to keep a diary five-and-twenty years ago. It would have been worth something to publish by this time. There's not many that have been so long in the line as I

have. Call-boys mostly become low comedians or clowns. You see, they stand a very good chance if they have any talent and ambition. They're always on the spot if anything happens, and they know all the parts from hearing them night after night. Perhaps an actor is taken ill some night at the last moment, and the stage is waiting. What's to be done? There is nobody who knows the part. Well; the call-boy hears all this, and if he has any pluck in him he says, 'I know the part—I don't mind going on for it;' and perhaps at that moment the audience is getting very impatient, and the manager says, 'Very well, get into the things, and look sharp,' and on he goes, and perhaps makes a hit. After that you may depend upon it he will not be content to be a call-boy; and perhaps the manager is only too glad of a chance of playing him off, cheap, against the leading man. Lots of call-boys have got on in this way, but most of them have become pantomimists. Call-boys are generally good at hanky-panky. I might have been a clown myself, for I have practised all clown's tumbling tricks on my landing during what I call my waits. But I never had any ambition, leastwise no spirit; and so it is that I have never risen.

Still for all that, there are persons of less importance in the theatre than me. In my own way I have a good deal of influence, and know more of what is going on than any one. Everybody in the theatre, from the supers and ballet-girls up to the manager himself, has to pass under my eye on their way up to the dressing-rooms, and as they all depend upon me for their 'calls,' they are all civil. 'Good evening, Robert.' 'How are you to-night, Robert?' I get that from everybody, even from the manager himself, who, though he has bullied everybody else in the theatre, has never bullied me. That's one of the advantages of being call-boy. I am a sort of neutral in the place. Nobody is jealous of me; and my position at the bottom of the stairs gives me opportunities of doing many people favours. The tip-top

members of the company will come to me sometimes and say, 'Robert, is he in his room?' meaning the manager. I know pretty well what they want to see him about—a re-engagement, a benefit, a new part, or something of that sort—and I say 'Yes, he is in his room; but he is in an awful bad temper to-night.' And they understand what that means, and don't go near him. And then again another time I will say, 'Do you want to see him?' and they'll say, 'Yes;' and then I'll say, 'You'll find him in his room; there's nobody with him, and he's in a first-rate temper to-night.' And they say 'Thank you, Robert,' and perhaps drop me sixpence or a shilling to wash the dust out of my throat; for I always tell everybody that passes that it's very dry at that corner. Ah! I'll be bound to say I have saved many a poor girl her engagement by sending her up just at the right time. I always know by his face what sort of a tune the manager is in, and he can't get up to his room without passing me.

Perhaps you wouldn't believe it now; but I have been the making of one or two dramatic authors in my time. Managers don't care much about dramatic authors, and always keep out of their way if they can. Even such as have the *entrée* behind the scenes can't always get at the manager. The doorkeeper has the same sort of favour for a dramatic author that a watch-dog has for a burglar. If an author asks for the manager at the stage-door, he is almost certain to be told that he is not in the house. But if he comes to me and behaves civil, I can put him in the way of getting what he wants—which is a quiet minute or two with the manager to talk about his piece. I remember a young man coming to me night after night to ask for him, but as he was a stranger to me, I always said the manager was engaged, or wasn't in, or some bit of that sort, which it is part of the duty of theatre officials to tell. At last, however, my heart softened towards him, for he was a polite, kind-spoken young man, and always carried a roll of paper in his breast-pocket, which I guessed

was a play of some kind which he wanted produced. One night when I sent him away with the usual answer he looked so disappointed that I felt for once quite ashamed of having told the usual lie. When he came again the manager was really not in; but I told him to go and sit in the green-room, and I would let him know when he came. He did so, and when the manager arrived I took the young man up to his room and knocked at the door, and left him there to manage the rest for himself. He remained in the room nearly half an hour, and when he came down his cheeks were flushed and his eyes sparkled, and he shook me kindly by the hand and thanked me. A short time afterwards he had a piece produced at our house. It was a great success, and he has had many successes since at our house and others. You know his name very well; all the town knows it; but perhaps it would never have been known at all but for me. However, he is welcome to all I did for him; for he is a gentleman, and is not above leaving the big folks and coming and offering his hand to Robert the call-boy, and asking him what he'll take to wash the dust down. I have known others again come to me in a grand bumptious sort of way that I wouldn't have moved a finger to serve. I might have helped them to what they wanted many a time, if they had only been a little civil and treated the call-boy like a fellow-creature.

Ah, sir, I have seen some very real life behind these canvas scenes. Grief and suffering and pain have many a night passed up those stairs when you have seen all smiling and lighthearted in front. The friends and acquaintances of my life have been made on this landing under the reflector. (I am speaking as if I were standing there now.) I have known them here, mixed with them here, conversed with them here, and nowhere else. This strip of boarding and these stairs have been my world. And friends and acquaintances that I have made here have grown old, and seen joy and sorrow, and passed away to the

grave, and I have missed them only in their relation to these stairs, which they have gone up and down o' nights in their paint and strange dresses.

In all my time there was only one person belonging to the theatre that I knew outside it, and that was old Peter Doyle the Pantaloon. He lived near me over the water, close to the Vauxhall Walk; and at pantomime time we used to walk home together. Peter's poor bit of a lodging over yonder was the scene of a drama in real life that I have never seen equalled on the stage, and I have seen a few dramas in my time, as you may believe. Peter had been Pantaloon at our house for years, and he continued to be engaged for Christmas long after he was past his work. He was like Herr von Joel, and was retained on the establishment in consideration of his long and faithful services. But a Christmas came when even long and faithful services would no longer balance Peter's infirmity, which was a lame leg, and he was told when he sent in his application that he wouldn't be wanted. I was sorry for Peter, for he was a great crony of mine, and he had a wife and family to keep, the youngest, a girl, being only nine years of age. You see Peter was not such a very old man, but he had had a bad accident in the country from falling through a trap, and that and rheumatism crippled him; and as you can imagine, a crippled Pantaloon ain't much use. I missed Peter sadly, for he dressed in a little room close by my landing, and I often used to run in and have a chat with him. He had all sorts of queer ways, and no end of funny stories to tell. You may know what a quaint kind of character he was when I tell you how he used to get his supper. The people about the neighbourhood all knew him, for Peter was fond of looking in at their shop windows and chatting to them, though he never bought much. The butcher round the corner was a particular friend of Peter's, and always cut him a good big quarter of a pound of steak, and didn't charge him too much for it. But

one night Peter was rather short of the browns, as he called them. He had only threepence. 'What am I to do, Robert?' he said; 'if I pay for the steak I shall have nothing left for the buster and the beer.' He always called a penny loaf a 'buster.'

'Well,' I said, 'stick it up, Peter.'

'No, no, lad,' said Peter; 'I don't like getting into debt; it's against my principle, and, as somebody said, my interest. No, that won't do; but here, I'll tell you what—Take that penny and ask the old woman,—that was the old woman who did the 'cleaning'—to go round and give my compliments to Mr. Collins, and ask him for a penn'orth of meat for my dog.'

'But you haven't got a dog, Peter,' I said.

'Oh yes, I have,' he said; 'a regular performing dog—sits up on his hind legs all day long, and always ready for his victuals. You just see how he'll put away the penn'orth of meat.'

Well, I gave the old woman Peter's penny, and sent her round, and she came back with a great piece of beef as big as my hand.

'There's a penn'orth, Peter,' I said.

'By Jove, yes,' he said; 'that's more than I get for threepence for myself. That's "love me love my dog," and no mistake. Where's the gridiron?' And Peter put the gridiron on the fire and cooked the beef; and when I came in again presently I found him eating it.

'You see the animal feeding,' said Peter; 'will you have a bit? It's my belief he's cut it off the rump, for it's as tender as a chicken.' After this Peter never sent for a quarter of a pound for himself, but always for a penn'orth for his dog.

It was a sad blow to Peter when he got the manager's letter; for he had counted on his engagement as usual, and had made all his little arrangements. However, the company subscribed a little money for him, and the manager offered to take his little daughter Rose on for a fairy in the pantomime. Peter was doatingly fond of Rose. She was the youngest of his family, and

the only girl; the others being great louts of boys who always kept the poor old chap in hot water. Peter did not much like his little darling going on the stage without someone to look after her; but when the manager told him that he might come to the theatre every night and look after her himself, he was reconciled to it, and little Rose was engaged. It was a matter of no consequence except to Peter himself, for Rose only went on in a group of little fairies, and there was a whole regiment of mothers waiting every morning at the stage-door with no end of little candidates for such parts. It was, however, of very great consequence to Peter; for Rose was engaged at a salary of seven shillings a week—they gave her more than the usual figure for her father's sake—and as Peter was doing nothing, this helped to keep the pot a-boiling. For the matter of that I fully believe that all that went into Peter's pot that winter came out of Rose's seven shillings.

Little Rose was very quick at learning, and the ballet-master took a fancy to her, and put her in the front row; and the people in front soon began to notice her, she was so pretty. Peter brought her to the theatre every evening, and came again when the pantomime was over and took her home; but he rarely came in. He didn't like to be 'behind' with us all, knowing that he was no longer one of us, and had nothing to do in the theatre. He used to wait at a public-house close by where he was well known, and it didn't cost him much for his beer there. There was a lot of young fellows frequented the house who felt it a privilege to treat Peter. Peter would no sooner go in and show his comical face than it would be—'What will you take, Peter?' from half a dozen of them at once. And Peter would answer in his quaint way, 'Well, since you are so kind, I will take two D of gin, cold, and a little leaf;' which meant two pennyworth of cold gin-and-water and a paper of tobacco.

But to go on with my story. At the end of the run of the pantomime little Rose was discharged, with

many more whose services would not be required until Christmas came round again. Peter was thrown on his beam-ends. Now that Rose's salary was gone there was nothing coming in at all. Peter began to look about for something to do. He offered himself at one or two of the minor theatres for utility business; but his lameness was against him, and no one would have him. He tried to get pupils for the stage, but most of the amateurs aspired to the higher walks of the drama, and who would go to a broken-down Pantaloon to learn to read Shakspeare? Then he thought of setting up a photographic shop; but the expense of the glass house and the apparatus was more than he could manage. Peter could find nothing to turn his hand to, and he took it very much to heart, and became low and desponding. At length, however, something turned up. He came to me one Sunday morning with a bright face to tell me all about it.

'Robert,' he said, 'I've met with an opening at last.'

I said I was glad to hear it, and asked what it was.

'What do you think, Robert?'

'Can't say, I'm sure,' I said; 'anything in your own line?'

'No, not exactly,' he said.

'Elocution?'

'No.'

'Photographs?'

'No; but you'll never guess, Robert. What do you say to the darky business?'

'The darky business!' I said; 'whatever do you mean, Peter?'

'Why,' he said, 'the nigger serenading line.'

'Lor', Peter,' I said; 'you must be joking.'

'Not a bit of it,' he said: 'you know I can play the banjo; and I've an offer to join a troupe; and why not? I must do something to support my family.'

'How did you hear of it?' I said.

And then he told me all about it.

'You know the chap with the wooden leg that lodges at the sweep's next door but one. You've often seen him playing the tambourine in a band of niggers. Well, yesterday I saw him coming along, with his

face washed and dressed in his best Sunday-going suit; and I said, knowing him from being a neighbour—

"Hallo, William! what's up?"

"I am going to bury the banjo," he says.

"Bury the banjo?" I says; "whatever do you mean, William?"

"Oh," he says, "Joe Barton, as played the banjo in our band is dead; and we're going to bury him to-day down at Woking. It's a bad job for us. I don't know what we shall do without him."

'What Bill said set me a-thinking, and I watched for him when he came back in the afternoon. I saw that he was a bit screwed as he came by, and I did not speak to him then; but I called in at his lodgings after tea, and found him sitting in a chair, with his head resting in his hands.

"You're not very well, William," I said.

"No," he said; "I can't help thinking of poor Joe as we laid under the earth to-day. I took a goodish drop to drink on the road home; but it hasn't improved my spirits, but rather the contrary. Joe and me were great friends—brothers, I may say. He left me all that belonged to him. There's the legacy in the corner there; I sha'n't have to pay duty on it."

'The legacy was Joe's serenading clothes—a long-tailed blue coat, a pair of bed-curtain trousers, and a white hat with crape round. They lay in a heap, with poor Joe's banjo on the top.

'I took up the instrument, and ran my fingers over the strings. Bill took no notice for a minute or so, until I began to play "Uncle Ned," when he looked up at me curiously.

"By Jove!" he said, "you can play it."

"Yes," I said; "I can a little; but I am rather out of practice. If I could get anything to do at it I should soon get my hand in again."

"What!" he said, "you don't mean to say that *you*—"

"Why not?" I said, "I can't get anything to do in my own line, and beggars mustn't be choosers;

besides, I think I rather should like the line."

" "You would?" he said, eagerly.

" "Yes," I said, "I would."

" "What do you say, then, to joining us, and taking poor Joe's place?"

"I said, "I'm your man."

"Well, the upshot of it was that Bill introduced me to the other members of the troupe, and I played a tune or two to them, and they said I would do with a little practice; and to-morrow night I am going to rehearse with them at Bill's lodgings, and the day after we open for the season. And now what do you think of it?"

"Well," I said, "Peter, it's honest; and I dare say there's a good bit of money to be picked up at it."

"Yes," he said, "there is; Bill told me that one rainy day about a month ago they played the whole of an afternoon up a court in the Strand, and took two pound fourteen. The only thing that troubles me is the wife."

"How do you mean?" I said.

"Well," he said, "she mightn't like it. Her father, you see, was a master pork-butcher in the Walworth Road, and she's rather proud."

"Well," I said, "I wouldn't tell her about it for a bit."

"No," he said, "that's just how I mean to act. I'll keep it dark as long as I can; and perhaps the ha'pence will reconcile her."

So Peter joined the troupe, and went to work, and did very well. Dressed up as a darky, with his face blacked, nobody recognized him but me; and of course I kept the secret. His wife, however, after a bit began to wonder how he got all the money; for he sometimes took home as much as seven or eight shillings for a day's work. Peter put her off as long as he could; but she got to close quarters with him at last, for she was proud and honestest than most in her station. Peter told me all about how she found him out. She was quite huffed with him because he would not tell her what he did; and one night, when they had quarrelled and made it up again, she said to him with tears in her eyes—

"I hope you are not a thief, Peter, dear?"

Peter laughed at first at the idea of the thing; but got indignant at last, and told her that his employment was honest, though humble—very humble.

"Very humble," she said; "then I know what it is, Peter."

"Well, what?" he said.

"Why," she said, "I have noticed that every night when you come home, you have a black rim all round your neck, and smudges of black about your ears. You don't like to tell me, Peter, but I know what you have done; you have turned chimney-sweep."

Peter could not help roaring with laughter at this; but the wife and he got so thick that night that he was obliged to confess. She didn't like it, and talked a good deal about her father the pork-butcher; but when Peter turned out his pockets, she dried her tears, and they had a nice hot supper, and agreed to say nothing more about it, and keep the secret from little Rose.

Peter did very well in the summer-time; but in the winter it was all over with the outdoor nigger-serenading business. The troupe had then to look out for engagements at parties; but there were not many of them to be got. So Peter was very thankful when little Rose was taken on again at the theatre to play in the pantomime. She was engaged to play a fairy, and represent the Queen of the Flowers in the transformation scene. As she had to stand upon a piece of wood that rose through the stage nearly to the flies, Peter came in every night to see her securely strapped on; and then he would wait chatting with me until the scene was over and little Rose was ready to go home. One night, however, Peter had an engagement, and did not come. As bad luck would have it little Rose got very nervous, let go her hold upon the iron bar, and fell head downwards, hanging to the scene by her strapped foot. The accident occurred just as the curtain was coming down upon the red fire; and the people in front knew nothing about it. I was the first to run to

Rose's assistance. Poor thing! she was badly bruised and cut with the projecting pieces of the scene, and her arms were bleeding. A carpenter held her up while I unstrapped her foot, and we took her into the housekeeper's room and laid her on a sofa. The manager came in in great excitement, and was for sending her to the hospital; but little Rose when she recovered a little asked for her father, and said she would rather go home. Peter not being there, the manager asked if any one knew where he lived; and I said I did.

'Very well,' he said; 'you get a cab and take her home, and send for a doctor to her at my expense. I don't think now she is so much hurt as frightened.'

So a cab was called, and little Rose was helped into it; and I went away home with her, leaving word with the stage-door keeper to find out Peter and let him know what had happened.

Mrs. Doyle was in a terrible way when I took the poor girl home, and cried and wrung her hands in great distress. However, when she heard Rose speak she stirred up a little, and undressed her and put her to bed, while I ran out for the doctor. The doctor—a very young man—came in directly; but when he saw Rose, and I told him the nature of the accident, he said she ought to be taken to the hospital at once, as it was very serious. Mrs. Doyle, however, would not hear of this; and the doctor said in that case he must call in another surgeon; and giving some directions to Mrs. Doyle, he hurried away for that purpose. Mrs. Doyle was now very much alarmed. Rose lay in the bed as pale as death, her eyes closed and her white lips slightly parted. There were no signs of life about her except the red scores upon her arms, which had been bruised and torn by the rough woodwork of the platform from which she had fallen.

'Good God!' Mrs. Doyle exclaimed, 'she is dead!'

At that moment there was a noise of hurried footsteps on the stairs, and some one entered. It was Peter in his nigger serenader's dress, with

his face blacked, and his banjo in his hand. He caught the terrible word 'dead,' and rushed to the bedside. He threw his hat and his banjo from him, and dropped upon his knees, taking Rose's cold white hand in his.

'My Rose! my dear, darling Rose!' he cried; 'dead! no, no, no; it cannot be. Rose, Rose, speak to me, darling! speak to me!'

In his frantic energy he pulled the poor girl towards him, but her body was like a dead thing, and when he relaxed his hold upon her hand it fell upon the counterpane like lead.

Peter rose as if suddenly horror-struck, and sunk into a chair. He sat there for some moments speechless, gazing in a stupefied way at his darling's blanched and motionless face, and the big tears rolled from his eyes and made white courses down his blackened face as they fell. At length he started up wildly, and cried, 'Yes, yes, she is dead, and it was I who killed her; I, her father! I was not there to see her safe to-night, as I ought to have been. If I had been there, this would not have happened. I—I have done it.' And he sank into the chair again, and hid his face in his hands, and sobbed like a child.

It was a strange, pitiful sight to see;—a father in that fantastic dress associated only with mockery and antics and nonsense, sitting there crushed, and broken, and weeping.

But Rose was not dead. When the doctors came in and gave her a restorative, she revived and opened her eyes. Peter was for rushing to clasp her in his arms, but I held him back, pointing to his dress.

'You will only frighten her, Peter,' I said; 'she has never seen you like this.' But he would not listen, and rushed to the bedside. Rose saw the strange figure, and shrank back and uttered a feeble scream. Peter turned away immediately, and ran from the room, tearing the fantastic rags from his body as if he had been mad. He came back presently, his face hastily washed, and in his own clothes. Rose had revived in the mean time,

and she knew him now, and gladdened poor Peter's heart with a smile and the whispered word 'father.' He was frantic with joy. But he had still a bitter grief in store for him. His darling Rose, his pet, his pride, the hope of the family—nay, its stay and support—was crippled for life.

Poor Peter's prospect was now a very dark one; but things came round in a strange way to bring help to him and happiness to others. What I am going to tell now came to my knowledge as I stood on my landing at the bottom of the stairs. After Rose's accident, the actors and actresses, as they went up and down, constantly asked me about her, and nearly every one of them sent her a little money. Actors are very kind-hearted in that way. But of all the persons in the theatre, no one took so much interest in Rose as Miss Everton. You remember what a favourite Miss Everton was at this theatre some few years ago. When she came here from the country she took everybody by storm, for she was not only a very clever actress, but she was very handsome and very pretty. All the young fellows about town were mad after her, and they filled the stalls night after night to see her. I took a great liking to Miss Everton from the first, for she was always very friendly and very chatty, and her success made no difference in her. But I trembled for her sometimes, when I saw how she was run after by the young swells. I knew that she was in the midst of a great blazing fire of temptation, for the stage-door was beset every night by her admirers, and a fast young baronet, who was privileged to come behind the scenes, fairly laid siege to her, and brought her all sorts of expensive presents. One night it was a ring, and the next a pair of bracelets; and she always showed them to me as she came up stairs, and how her eyes did sparkle over them, woman-like! But I knew that these presents boded no good to her, for the young baronet was a notorious rake. However, I was glad to believe, from what I saw, that she kept them all at a safe distance, until one night I overheard a conversation between

her and Sir William in the green-room. As I stood close to the green-room door, and they talked pretty loud, I could not help overhearing what they said. Miss Everton was dressed to go home, and I heard her say:

'I must bid you good-night, Sir William.'

'No, no; don't go yet,' he said. 'I can't bear to part with you.'

'Oh, but I must,' she said; 'it's getting late.'

'So it is,' he said; 'and you are going alone.'

'Yes,' she said. 'I always go alone.'

'That's not right,' he said. 'You are too young, too beautiful; allow me to be your squire.'

She said gaily that she couldn't think of it; but he pressed her, and praised her beauty, and said he loved her to distraction, and acted the false part that he had acted many a time before. I stood in fear and trembling, and could hear my heart beat within me; for Miss Everton was not protesting now, and presently I heard her say, in a resolute way, as if she had made up her mind, 'Very well, Sir William, you shall be my squire to-night; you shall see me home.'

I have often wondered why those words should have given me such pain. I felt them like a stab in the heart. I can only suppose that I was in love, in a humble way, with Miss Everton myself.

Miss Everton and Sir William came out, and he gave her his arm, and as she passed me, she said, 'Good night' quite gaily, and her face was flushed, and her eyes sparkled as if in triumph.

I felt cold at heart, and could have cried. The poor moth!

I never had any ambition until that moment, and then I wished that I were manager, that I might say to Miss Everton—'Remain here, I wish to speak to you.' But she passed out, leaning on Sir William's arm.

What followed is no secret now.

Sir William called a cab, and they got into it together; but when they had proceeded a little way, Miss Everton called to the man to stop

at a pastrycook's shop. She got out, saying to Sir William that she was going to buy something for supper. Sir William of course offered to pay, but she would not allow him. She insisted upon buying and paying for everything herself. She bought a fowl, a shape of jelly, and a bottle of wine, and giving directions to the driver, got into the cab again.

'Oh, sha'n't we be jolly,' said Sir William.

'It will be quite a treat, won't it?' said Miss Everton.

'And with you to grace the meal.' Sir William was proceeding with a fine speech, when he noticed that the cab was going across one of the bridges.

'I thought, Miss Everton,' he said, 'you lived at St. John's Wood.'



'Yes,' she said, 'I live there with my mother; but I have a friend over the water.'

'Ah, I see,' said Sir William, delighted.

The cab turned through some narrow, dirty streets.

'Your friend, my dear Miss Everton,' said Sir William, 'does not appear to live in a very aristocratic quarter of the town.'

'No,' she said; 'but my friend has good reasons for that.'

'Oh, I see,' said Sir William.

'Well, I'll bet a wager she is not so pretty as you are.'

'Yes, Sir William, she is prettier.'

'Oh, nonsense, I won't believe that,' he said.

'Well, Sir William, you shall judge for yourself; we are there.'

The cab had stopped at a dark and narrow passage. Miss Everton paid the cabman, and told Sir William to follow her. He was too much astonished now to offer to pay for her, or to do anything but stare in wonder.

'It is very dark here,' said Miss Everton; 'but I know the way; take my hand, and I will conduct you.'

At another time Sir William would have been enraptured to take her hand, but he half hesitated now.

'What,' she said, 'are you afraid to take my hand and follow me?'

'No, no,' he said, gaily; 'but it seems so odd, you know. I could not of course imagine that you had friends here.'

Miss Everton knocked at a door at the end of the passage. It was opened by an elderly woman, who recognized her, and mentioned her by name. Miss Everton gave her a significant look, and said aloud, 'I have brought a friend; can we go up-stairs?'

The woman said 'Yes,' and held the light while Sir William and Miss Everton went up, the former wondering at the bare walls and the general poverty-stricken aspect of the place. At the top of the stairs, Miss Everton knocked at a latched door, and a man's voice said, 'Come in.'

They entered, Miss Everton still leading Sir William by the hand. It was a poorly-furnished bed-chamber, in the corner of which, on a truckle bed, lay a sick child, while an old man sat by the bedside watching her.

'I have come to see little Rose, Peter,' Miss Everton said. 'And I have brought a friend who has often inquired for her.'

And then she went up to little

Rose and kissed her, and asked her if she was better; and Rose smiled and thanked her, and said she was much better now.

'And see, Rose,' she said, 'a kind gentleman has come to see you; he has brought a chicken for you, and a jelly, and some wine; you must take some now, it will do you good.'

And she went and took the things from Sir William, and spread a cloth upon the bed, and fed Rose with her own hands. And Sir William sat in a chair gazing at her, saying never a word, and making no sign, until his eyes filled with tears, when he rose and turned away to hide them. Those were tears of grace. They made that rake and libertine a man. When her mission of love and charity was over, Miss Everton took him by the hand once more, and led him down old Peter's poor stairs and out into the dark dirty street. And there, under heaven, he fell down on his knees before her, and humbly kissed her hand, and said, 'Lady, forgive me!'

Very shortly afterwards, Miss Everton quitted the stage and became Lady William Hartley. She is a happy wife and mother now, and Sir William is a happy husband, and they have not forgotten old Peter and his crippled daughter Rose. Who knows how it might have been but for the misfortune of that poor little Christmas Fairy!

H.

CHRISTMAS AT SUNNYMEADE HALL ;

OR, ---

Country Cousins at Home.

THE old Christmas customs were carefully observed at Sunnymeade, the beautiful country home of the Woodbine family.

There were only two unwelcome guests under its hospitable roof. Care and Anxiety (the ill-favoured pair, whose presence casts a shadow over so many domestic hearths at every Christmastide) were secretly entertained, although outwardly ignored, by each individual member of the domestic circle.

Hand in hand they made their way into the private chamber of the gentle mother of the family, who, as she mused over the cheerful fire in her own dressing-room, felt their dull, heavy presence at her heart, while with cruel fingers they drew hard lines across her aching, and hitherto unwrinkled brows.

'Dear, dear Sunnymeade!' she sighed, rather than said, softly to herself—'the last Christmas, the very last;' and unaccustomed to the

weight of the burden, which she had carried in her breast for that whole day, and, indeed, for weeks previously, she gave way suddenly to a torrent of bitter tears. She was not aware that the faithful companion of the sunny hours that had made every succeeding Christmas at Sunnymeade more sweet than the last, was within earshot of her heavy sobs, until a strong, gentle hand was laid upon her shoulder, and a loving but faltering voice said tenderly—

‘This must not be, Bessie; this is the only thing which I cannot bear. For better for worse, remember, my love,’ as he wiped the tears from the comely cheeks of his wife, with the gentleness of a bridegroom, and the gallantry of a highly-bred gentleman of the old-fashioned, and now, alas! well-nigh extinct school of manners.

‘There is no sting in the worst, after all,’ said Mrs. Woodbine, smiling through her tears, ‘as long as I have you and the children. But five-and-twenty Christmases we have spent here together, and we should be more than human if we had no regrets.’

‘You are right, Bessie,’ replied the Squire, gravely; ‘if it were not for the children’s sake, I would not leave it now; but you would not let me rob them, or make them pay the penalty of my own folly, Bessie? you would be the last to advise it. Ten years will be nothing to look back upon; and then, God willing, Sunnymeade shall know such a Christmas gathering as it has never known before. Who knows how many sons and daughters, ay, and grandsons, and granddaughters, may not be added to our family party before that time comes?’

‘Who indeed?’ said his wife, cheerfully. ‘And now let us go down, or the girls will think that I am giving way—as the maids call it. Are my eyes very red?’ she added, looking fondly up into her husband’s face, with whom since the day when he had first brought her home, the blooming mistress of Sunnymeade, she had never exchanged an angry or reproachful word.

The Squire’s reply was sealed with a kiss.

‘We are getting childish in our old age,’ observed Mrs. Woodbine; and it was indeed true, that the first real care which they had ever known, had drawn out, and thrown into strong relief, the deep, faithful attachment of years, to which it had given the glow and the freshness, and the sunshine of early youth.

The care that had come to Sunnymeade, was the care of undeserved and unexpected poverty. Squire Woodbine, whose generous nature and blameless honour were above suspicion, had backed bills for a friend, to an amount which it would take ten years of the most rigid economy to save out of his yearly income; but he and his wife had determined upon such a line of conduct, in preference to that of touching their capital, or raising mortgages upon the estate, justly considering that the father’s individual imprudence should not be allowed to injure the future prospects of their children. It had thus become necessary that they should leave Sunnymeade, and reduce their expenditure; and without a moment’s hesitation, Mr. and Mrs. Woodbine had resolved upon a course which involved a bitter self-sacrifice on themselves.

Care had come that Christmas to Sunnymeade, but shame or disgrace would never enter its doors. ‘By living upon five hundred a year for ten years,’ said the Squire, ‘we shall save enough to pay off the debt. Frank shall never have it to say that he came into an encumbered estate, because his father could not face the consequences of his folly like a man.’

One thing, however, was unanimously determined upon, which was that the last Christmas at the home to which they were all so fondly attached, should be kept up as royally as in former years. ‘We will keep it dark until after the Twelfth-Night ball,’ said Uncle John, the poor relation, and yet, strange to say, the counsellor and oracle of the family. Take my advice, and enjoy yourselves as long as you can, and let the young ones have their Christmas fun.’

It was difficult to associate the idea of fun with the gaunt visage of Uncle John. He was a tall, thin, iron-grey man, a few years older than the Squire, with a thoughtful brow and a keen eye, and looking very unlike the poor dependent upon his relation's bounty, which in truth he was.

Uncle John was an elder brother of Mrs. Woodbine's, who had been sent abroad in his youth, to make his fortune, and who had returned to England, a Christmas or two back, a ruined but unbroken man, to find a hospitable welcome to the home of his wealthy brother-in-law, Squire Woodbine, of Sunnymeade.

Christmas, therefore, was ever afterwards associated in his mind with what he called the happiest epoch of his life.

He had been before something of a cynic and a misanthrope: human nature had not presented itself to his contemplation in the most favourable light; and he expected, as he expressed himself, to have been kicked out of Sunnymeade, directly it was discovered that he was not a Nabob uncle, in the possession of fabulous wealth.

With open heart and hand, however, his good as well as wealthy brother-in-law had received him; and with one accord the whole family had welcomed him to their genial and happy home; so that, with the exception of a few weeks which he spent in London, he lived there all the year round.

The Woodbine family consisted of Frank the eldest, and Benjie the youngest, the two sons of the family, the one four-and-twenty, the other but just eight; of Fanny and Magdalene, the two girls in their blushing teens, and Emily, who was a year older than Benjie, and his chosen and inseparable companion.

When Mr. and Mrs. Woodbine joined the family party, after the conversation recorded above, the domestic circle was complete; and the centre and point of attraction, as was usually the case, was the gaunt, awkward form of Uncle John.

Some interesting topic was evidently being warmly discussed, and

Fanny's voice was heard indignantly exclaiming, while she held an open letter in her hand, 'I wonder they are not ashamed to offer themselves, after their behaviour to us in town last year; I declare if I were mamma that I would write and put them off.'

'You may rely upon one thing,' said Frank, laughing, 'that they know nothing of our altered fortunes. I shall be on the list of Aunt Huntington's *detrimentals* now, and even Aggy will decline a flirtation, in direct defiance of "dearest mamma."'

'I can never like them again,' observed Magdalene, gravely, 'because of their conduct to mamma; but if they can make up their minds to come, the hospitality of Sunnymeade will be a tacit reproach to them.'

'Regally said, Queen Magdalene,' said Uncle John; 'let no one impeach its hospitality this Christmas, whether friend or foe. Let them come, and you shall have your revenge, is the prediction of the "poor relation." ' And he began, as was his wont when anything tickled his fancy, to sing—

'A poor relation came to beg,
In kicking him out I broke my leg.
I broke my leg.
'Tooral ooral ooral !'

'You don't know what we used to call you, uncle,' said Fanny, the liveliest and prettiest of his nieces; 'we thought you were rich and cross when we were all children, because you used to write mamma long letters full of advice, and never sent her any presents—we used to call you "Uncle Crabtree."'

'And we were so glad when we found that you were poor and not cross,' said Benjie, taking his uncle's large hand caressingly in his own small fist; 'because if you had been rich, you know, you would not have come to live with us.'

Uncle John, as will be perceived from this conversation, was a little fond of parading his poverty. 'No one shall say that I am looked up to for my money,' he used to observe, laughingly. 'Even Benjie will get nothing more than my old

Bible when I die, for I have sunk my annuity, and learnt the art of "spending half a crown upon sixpence a day," which I believe, after all, to be the true end of life.'

Benjie was the youngest, and the pet of the house; and if Uncle John tenderly loved the rest of the family, Benjie was the apple of his eye. The warmhearted and affectionate child had wound himself closely round his heart; and no one of the family had yet ventured to tell the little fellow that Uncle John was going away.

'Does Benjie know it?' each one had said to the other: and the reply had invariably been—'No, he does not know—nobody likes to tell him.'

'When do our trusty and well-beloved cousins make their appearance?' said Frank, rather nervously; for his cousin Claire had been his first and early love; and although her conduct to him in town had dispelled the illusion for the time, now that the old relations and associations were about to be renewed, there was a flutter of interest excited in his heart, which he would have been very unwilling to acknowledge.

It will be as well to mention here, for the edification of those readers who are not fortunate enough to see the August number of 'London Society,' that the little episode there described, under the title of 'Country Cousins in Town,' will explain, if referred to, why the advent of the town cousins, Claire and Agatha Huntington, was not looked forward to, with any very lively emotion of pleasure by the Woodbine family. After having partaken of their generous and warmhearted hospitalities the previous winter, at their country home, they had ignored and slighted Mrs. Woodbine and her daughters, when they went up to London in the spring; and Claire, the eldest daughter, had jilted her cousin Frank (to whom she had, during her stay at Sunnymeade, given the greatest encouragement), for the sake of the attentions of a supercilious young guardsman, who, having amused himself sufficiently at her expense, had in his turn thrown her over, with as much unconcern as

that with which he would have flung away a half-finished cigar, or bestowed a languid kick upon his favourite dog.

'We must not have the tree until Twelfth Night, when your cousins will be here,' said good-natured Mrs. Woodbine, in whose heart no unkind or revengeful feeling ever had a place. 'We are not so poor, but that we can afford some remembrance of Sunnymeade to all;' and the tears would have gathered in her eyes again, at the bitter thought of the 'last time,' if the loving eyes of the Squire had not been fixed upon her face, bent upon reading her feelings in every changing expression that flitted across it.

The preparation of the Christmas tree at Sunnymeade had ever been as costly as well as a graceful one; for it was always hung with presents of either a useful or ornamental nature, as the position of the receiver warranted; and as each member of the household, from the master and mistress to the humblest dependent, both offered and received a gift of some sort, the lighting of the tree in the large hall was a solemnity of which every one concerned in the matter felt a lively and awakening interest.

Christmas-day was spent by the family in comparative privacy, and with mingled feelings of pleasure and pain; but on the day following the expected guests arrived.

Mr. and Mrs. Huntington, and their daughters, Claire and Agatha; Sir Harry Douglas, a bachelor neighbour; Captain Alendale, a captain of dragoons, who was laying siege to the heart of Fanny Woodbine; and Lady Jane, and Lady Kitty Elfin-tower, whose acquaintance with the Woodbines had ripened into friendship since the eventful season in town, formed the party staying in the house: and everybody who knows what country-house visiting is, knows what a fund of social enjoyment and genial companionship such a party, if well selected, is capable of affording.

The Squire and his wife were in their element on such an occasion, while Uncle John, the poor relation, was a universal favourite

among young and old. Mrs. Huntington was singular in despising him: but she had an unconquerable antipathy to poverty in the abstract; and the presence of her brother's brother-in-law at Sunnymeade was always hateful in her envious sight.

'I cannot think how they can tolerate him,' she observed to her daughters, in the after-dinner conclave in her dressing-room, where they were preparing for the Twelfth Night ball; 'he is a perfect bugbear to me.'

'He is the prince of toadies, and that is the reason why they make such a fuss with him,' said Claire, spitefully. 'He flatters the girls upon their looks, and the Squire upon his hospitality, and Aunt Woodbine upon her good-nature. All toadies are more or less clairvoyants with regard to people's little weaknesses, which it is part of their game to discover, and then to play upon *ad libitum*; it is the poor relation hanger-on-of-the-family cant, and it sickens me.'

'You would find it sweeter if you had the opportunity of tasting it yourself,' said Agatha, who was fond of teasing her elder sister; 'but it is very evident that the poor relation has no great fancy for any of us. Of course the dear, good, unsophisticated girls, told him what a doubtful welcome we gave them to town in the spring.'

'He knows on which side his bread is buttered as well as most people,' was the remark of the *fine-lady* mother, who, like other fine ladies of our acquaintance, could descend to unmitigated vulgarity when her feelings were stirred or agitated more than usual; 'he fawns upon my brother's weak good-nature in a way that to me is perfectly disgusting.'

As the reader will perceive from these remarks, the skeleton in the cupboard, in the shape of threatening poverty, was not even suspected by any of the assembled guests at Sunnymeade.

Mr. and Mrs. Woodbine had determined that their Christmas festivities should be carried on that year with even greater zest than

heretofore. This determination had, indeed, originated with Uncle John, although none of the family would have recognized the fact if it had been directly alluded to: his was the quiet influence that was felt, without being brought prominently into notice, and it was from his lips that the remark had fallen, that as there was nothing disgraceful in the proposed retrenchment, it would be a 'plucky thing' to carry on the Christmas hospitalities for the last time upon their usual scale.

But the secret which had been so well kept up to the last moment—for the night in question was Twelfth Night, at the conclusion of which the worthy Squire had determined upon making known to his assembled guests the altered state of his circumstances—was doomed to be revealed to the Huntington party, through the instrumentality of little Benjie, who had followed his cousins to their room, as was his frequent custom, to see them adorn themselves for the ball. He liked to see the ornaments taken from their red velvet, or white satin nests, and clasped round the throats and arms of the pretty sisters; and when he was allowed, as he sometimes was, to be the principal performer in the operation, it was a proud and happy moment of his life.

He had been gazing with unfeigned admiration at a certain pearl cross, which his cousin Claire had been carefully attaching to some black velvet ribbon, wherewith to adorn her swan-like throat, when his attention had been suddenly arrested by the heterodox remark, quoted above, with regard to his Uncle John.

The colour mounted to his cheeks; his eyes, large, dark, and gentle by nature, grew larger, and flashed with indignation, while, clenching his fist, he stood forth the champion of the absent and the defamed.

'How dare you say that Uncle John is a toady, cousin?' he said. 'Don't you know that he has been kinder to papa and all of us, since we were ruined, than he was before. I don't quite know what a toady means, but I do know very well

that it does not mean any one that would do that.'

'Heyday, child! what say you about being ruined?' exclaimed his Aunt Huntington, her curiosity excited to the utmost. 'I always thought that my brother lived above his income, but I did not think that it had come to this.'

'Oh dear! what have I said? what have I done? I forgot that you were none of you to know it, until after supper to-night. You should not have abused Uncle John, and then I should not have let it out.'

'Uncle John will find himself in the wrong box,' said Claire Huntington, with a sneer; 'but what can be the object of keeping up these false appearances if what Benjie says is true?'

'I do not know what you mean, cousin,' replied the child: 'but I do know that you say bad things, and I don't care now about seeing you dressed for the ball.' And without further ceremony he rushed from the room, and seeking his mother in hers, he buried his curly head in her lap, and sobbed so hysterically, that she succeeded with difficulty in soothing him into sufficient composure to tell her what ailed him.

As she stooped to lay her arms fondly round him, and to press him to her warm motherly heart, a parcel which she had been examining, and which had been one of her presents from the Christmas tree, fell from her lap to the ground; the direction was as follows:—

'A remembrance of Twelfth Night at Sunnymeade, and a New Year's gift to my dear sister Elizabeth, in token of the affectionate gratitude of her brother John.'

'Don't open it until you dress for the ball,' he had said hurriedly, as he pressed it into her hand, when the parcel was detached from the tree, 'but wear it this evening for my sake.'

Mrs. Woodbine had done as he had requested, and had restrained her curiosity until the time arrived for the ball toilette, which had been deferred until the more juvenile festivities were happily over; and she had been on the point of un-

tying the string, and breaking the seals, when Benjie had surprised her by his sudden entrance, and by his burst of unrestrained grief.

As he grew more composed, his mother bethought herself of his love of untying and opening parcels—a sovereign remedy generally for his deepest sorrows—and telling him to pick up the one she had dropped, she gave him a pair of scissors to assist the operation.

With the tears still in his eyes, which now, however, sparkled behind them, Benjie bent over the pleasing task; and as paper after paper was hastily thrown aside, an old-fashioned jewel-case revealed itself to his eager gaze.

'Now what has Uncle John been thinking of in getting me jewellery,' said his sister, with a sigh; 'it is really too bad of him, out of his slender pittance too.' But when the lid of the case flew back under the influence of the pressure of Benjie's diminutive thumb, an expression of astonishment fell simultaneously from mother and son. 'Oh, mamma! how beautiful!' was the exclamation of the latter.

'What can he mean?' exclaimed the mother, whose feminine perceptions recognized at a glance the great value of the glittering gems. 'Why your uncle must have taken leave of his senses, my dear; these jewels are worth a king's ransom;' and hearing her husband's step in the passage, she called him in to share in her wonder and admiration at the munificence of the poor relation's gift.

'They are very pretty,' was his remark. 'I suppose Uncle John has had them by him for some time, for the setting is very old-fashioned.'

'Pretty! old-fashioned!' said Mrs. Woodbine, aggrieved. 'Why they are priceless, and the setting is perfection. What will your sister think if I wear them to-night?' she continued, with a scarcely perceptible smile of triumph, which she would have been more than femininely human not to have experienced. 'Lady Elfintower herself has not finer diamonds than these; why the price of them would pay our debt, dear,' she added, as

her cheeks flushed crimson with excitement at the bare thought. 'Uncle John knows it, and has given them to me in his own delicate way for that purpose. Please God, we shall not have to leave Sunnymeade after all.'

'Sixty thousand pounds for those gimcracks, my dear Bessie! you must be raving,' said the Squire, in alarm, for he thought that his good wife, in the exuberance of her gratitude, had taken leave of her senses.

'Gimcracks as you call them, they are worth more than that,' she said, taking the necklace reverentially from its place, where it lay surrounded by its bright compeers. I will wear them to-night, as he wishes, but afterwards, with John's leave, they must be disposed of to pay the debt.'

'We will talk about that afterwards, my love, for I cannot believe that the jewels are worth the money; it would not have been like Uncle John to pass himself off as a poor relation, whilst holding such a mine of wealth in his hands.'

'What is that you say?' interrupted a well-known voice at the door. 'I came in search of Benjie, and did not, I must own, expect to hear myself abused in full family conclave. A man who has spent half his life in the East, might be supposed to have come by a crystal or so honestly, eh, Bessie? These, to tell you the truth, I intended to keep for Frank's wife, but I had a fancy to see you in them to-night. Let our sun go down in glory, as it will rise again ten years hence.'

With these words Uncle John disappeared, and his sister said, with a sigh, 'That hint about Frank's wife, was his way of saying that he did not wish me to part with them. It *would* be a sin too,' she added; and perhaps with pardonable motherly pride, her imagination became radiant with a vision of a fair young bride, round whose throat she would clasp the priceless necklace on her wedding morn, while wondering bridesmaids looked on, dazzled and amazed.

'You must wear your black velvet to-night, with these, mother,' said Benjie, who was well up in the

mysteries of the toilette, and who had a natural delight in the contemplation of beautiful and sumptuous things.

'You are right, dear child,' said his mother, kissing him. 'Your sisters must not see me until I am dressed; how surprised they will be when I appear in this blaze of light!'

THE BALL.

The mansion of Sunnymeade was an old-fashioned one, but it was large and very commodious. The saloon was well adapted for a ball-room, and the Christmas festivities generally concluded with a dance, to which all the neighbourhood was invited; and it was for this event that the inmates of the house were preparing, on the evening described in the last chapter.

It was the Squire's intention when the guests and the family were assembled at supper—when, according to the old-fashioned custom, healths were proposed and speeches made—to make a speech informing his friends and neighbours of his altered circumstances, and to take an affectionate farewell of them before leaving the county for so many years.

The good Squire was fond of making a speech, when he felt himself surrounded by friends and genial well-wishers; and he knew by intuition with what warm and genuine sympathy his announcement and farewell would be received.

It was a sort of innocent sensation scene which he had pictured to himself, and from which his genial, ingenuous nature, derived some sort of consolation.

Everything was ready, and the musicians were tuning their instruments for the first dance. The young ladies of the family were standing in a group round the fireplace, awaiting the welcome sound of the grind of the first carriage-wheels upon the gravel road.

They formed a very pretty group, the two sisters, and their equally pretty though less unsophisticated cousins; and as they advanced gracefully to receive their guests, even Mrs. Huntington smiled approbation.

'Where is mamma?' whispered

CHRISTMAS AT SUNNYMEADE HALL; OR, COUNTRY COUSINS AT HOME.

• Drawn by G. W. Cope, R.A.

[See the Story.]

Magdalene to her sister, anxiously. 'I hope she has not broken down at the last moment.' But as she spoke the words Mrs. Woodbine entered the room, looking wonderfully handsome.

She was as nervous as a girl, about entering the room alone, so conscious was she of the sensation which her brilliant appearance would be sure to create, especially among the feminine part of the community; and meeting with Uncle John in the hall, she linked her arm in his, and thus amply protected, made her public entry into the saloon. 'You are beautiful to-night, Bessie,' said the Squire, as he proudly surveyed his wife; and 'Good gracious! what has mamma got on?' was the simultaneous exclamation of her two daughters, as they watched their mother's entrance.

But if their amazement was great, it was as nothing compared to that with which their aunt Huntington and their two cousins gazed upon the regal *parure* in which simple Mrs. Woodbine was decked that night. 'Where can they come from? whose can they be?' they asked of one another, without receiving any satisfactory reply. 'Can Lady Elfintower have possibly lent her her diamonds for the night? What a ridiculous display of borrowed finery if she has! Dressed like a duchess, and hanging on the arm of the arch toady still,' were the remarks which were bandied from one to another; and so engrossed were the whole party in the surmises and suggestions to which Mrs. Woodbine's splendour had given rise, that they did not perceive their cousin Frank, who had joined them, and was waiting for a moment's silence, to enable him to engage his cousin Claire for the first dance. Perceiving, however, that their ill-natured and invidious remarks had for their object his mother and his Uncle John, he was justly angered, and turning quickly upon his heel, with his handsome face in a glow of righteous indignation, he muttered to himself, 'She is not worth it; I will not sacrifice my own pleasure for

hers;' and perceiving the youthful and unaffectedly graceful Lady Kitty enter the ball-room at that moment with her sister, it would not have appeared to the closest observer that he made any sacrifice of his own inclination in engaging her hand for the first quadrille.

The Squire was anxious that every one should dance; and while those couples were arranging their places, who had required no coercion or persuasion in the cause, he was enlisting the whole band of wall-flowers for a quiet quadrille, providing them with partners with a happy recklessness and dash which none but the Squire himself could have so successfully assumed.

In a few moments every one was standing up, and himself and his wife were the only couple unprovided with a *vis-à-vis*. 'Mamma is in the library,' whispered Agatha to her uncle: 'you must make her dance to-night.'

'So she shall, by Jove!' was the reply. 'She must dance with Uncle John, he is a defaulter as well; and signing to the musicians to wait for his return, he sought his sister and his brother-in-law, as a *vis-à-vis* for himself and his partner. 'I will not be contradicted to-night of all nights in the world, Dolly,' he said, to the intense disgust of his fine-lady sister, who had been christened Dorothy after a maiden aunt in the family, from whom expectations had been entertained. 'You must stand up with Uncle John; we are not in May-fair now you know,' he added, mischievously, 'and at Rome, as the saying is, we must do as the Romans do.'

If a glance could have slain, the career of poor Uncle John would have come at that moment to an untimely end.

Mrs. Huntington, making him a mock curtsy of exaggerated deference, and scarcely deigning to rest the tips of her fingers on his offered arm, suffered herself to be led by him into the circle of dancers, where they took their places opposite to the Squire, and the brilliant apparition at his side.

His first remark was one ill calculated to pour oil upon the troubled

waters, in the breast of the injured lady. 'How handsome Bessie looks to-night,' he observed; 'she looks as young as Magdalene now.'

As Mrs. Huntington had been jealous of the beauty of her brother's wife, from the first day that he paid court to her, a handsome, happy girl at a county ball, it was not likely that the amiable feeling would decrease in intensity with advancing years. A sullen 'humph' was all the reply she deigned to the assertion; but after a moment's pause, unable to conceal the rancour which the sight of the diamonds had called up in her breast, she said, 'What folly all this is, if what rumour says is true. If my brother is as nearly ruined as people say, all these livery servants may be bailiffs in disguise, for all one knows to the contrary.'

'Your informants, whoever they are'—how little Uncle John suspected his darling Benjie of the delinquency!—'have evidently failed to tell you that dishonour and your brother's name are not likely to be mentioned in the same breath. His ruin, as you are pleased to call it, is the result of an over-generous and trustful nature, and he is prepared to face it like a man.'

'It is true, then,' said Mrs. Huntington, with a gasp of anxiety; and she congratulated herself inwardly on the escape which Claire had had in rejecting the attentions of her eldest cousin the previous season in town.

'I am not at liberty to say how far it is true, and how far it is false,' replied Uncle John, coldly; 'but if it is true, my sister and her children will require all the consolation which *real friends* can afford. How far can we rely upon you, Mrs. Huntington, for taking them in for a short time, when they leave Sunnymeade?'

'Indeed,' was the cold reply. 'I fear I can do nothing in the matter; as people make their beds they must lie on them. If my brother has been such a fool as to waste his substance upon idle dependents, it is no business of mine.'

Uncle John's grey eye flashed fire at this remark, but he kept his own counsel, and the quadrille being hap-

pily over he showed great alacrity in conducting his partner to her seat.

Magdalene had been dancing with Sir Harry Douglas, and her bright young face was more beautiful than usual, as she turned to make a smiling remark upon the unusual event of Uncle John's dancing.

'I wish every one to be happy to-night,' was his earnest rejoinder: 'every one *shall* be happy to-night, indeed, as far as I am concerned.'

'Why should not I be included in your uncle's sentence?' said Magdalene's partner, as he skilfully tried to evade the vacant seat by Mrs. Woodbine, and to lead off his charge on a vague excursion into byways and anterooms in the nominal pursuit of tea.

'Wait, please, wait till after supper,' said Magdalene, nervously, and evidently in allusion to some previous conversation; and withdrawing her hand a little abruptly from his arm she took the nearest place, leaving Sir Harry perhaps more amazed than he had ever been in his life, at hearing himself requested by the most modest and retiring young lady of his acquaintance, to defer the momentous question, which would affect the happiness of his future life, until 'after supper.'

Frank, in the mean time, had so far improved his acquaintance with Lady Kitty, that, ardent and susceptible as he was, he would doubtless have proposed to her there and then, if the vision of the after-supper revelation had not also restrained him.

Claire Huntington, mortified and annoyed at the little estimation in which she was comparatively held, determined upon a petty revenge, by carrying on a flirtation with Captain Alendale, between whom and Fanny Woodbine she fancied that there existed a growing attachment.

'What a charming family they are!' had been the remark of that young officer, in accents that seemed to come low and muffled through his heavy moustache, while his eyes followed, as he spoke, the graceful motions of the fair Fanny among the revolving crowd before them.

'Charming!' was the insidious reply. 'How sad it is, though, poor

things, to think of keeping such a show to the last'—for Mrs. Huntington had whispered to her daughter that Benjie's testimony had been confirmed by the poor relation, and that the Woodbines were going to leave Sunnymeade for good. 'I suppose you have heard that they are going to leave this place owing to the embarrassed state of my uncle's affairs?'

'You don't say so,' was the quick reply. 'I imagined that both the Miss Woodbines had large fortunes of their own, and that Frank was heir to ten thousand a year at least.'

'Oh! dear me, no. You have been quite deceived. But I am sorry that I have let out that Fan has not the snug little fortune of twenty thousand pounds, which wicked worldly men like yourself would think a *very great* attraction, in addition to her own *beaux yeux*.'

Whether Fanny Woodbine would have been obliged to her or not, for taking the gallant captain off her hands, I am not now at liberty to say, but certain it was that he did not approach her with his usual eagerness, but stood in the doorway twirling his moustache, with as near an expression of thought upon his countenance as it was capable of wearing. There was a good deal of repetition in the language of his reflections, which can be expressed in a few words, although they wrung the brain of the warrior, with the anguish attending the strain of unwonted and original thought. 'By Jove, though, it was a near thing, a very near thing. By Jove! I have had an escape. A nice girl, too, but no money. By Jove! what a sell.'

So in that little community there were many contending emotions at work, on which the intended disclosure of the night would be brought strongly to bear; and as the time drew near in which it was to be made, the Squire grew nervous and agitated, and his wife felt the beating of an anxious heart, under the weight of the jewels which had been the wonder and admiration of the room.

'They are very fine, I believe,' said the Squire to Lady Kitty Elfin-tower as he led her into supper; 'they were intended for Frank's

wife, according to Uncle John, but he wished Mrs. Woodbine to wear them to-night.'

The colour rose rather warmly to the cheek of his companion as he casually mentioned the words, 'Frank's wife;' and Claire Huntington, who was close behind them with her cavalier, Captain Alendale, gave a start of anything but gratified surprise.

The ball-supper on Twelfth Night at Sunnymeade was always a sort of state affair, at which every guest was seated in comfort; and the engagements, therefore, for the supper-dance, were always arranged with due regard to the importance of the occasion. This night, in particular, the members of the family had been anxious to secure a companion of whose friendly sympathy they could feel well assured; and, judging from outward appearances, they were each well supported on the trying occasion. The Squire and his wife sat side by side, according to the custom observed at Sunnymeade from time immemorial; Magdalene had on her right hand Sir Harry Douglas, and on her left her sister Fanny, who had seen with amused surprise the formerly devoted captain pass her by and enlist her cousin Claire with much apparent solicitude for the supper-dance. The rector's son, Ralph Hartopp, whom the more officious attentions of his soldier rival had kept at bay, had anxiously secured her for his partner, and the best news that could have greeted his ears would have been that she was poor and portionless, and that it remained for him to make a name and a fortune worthy of her gracious acceptance. This, you will observe, was selfishness also, but it took a more noble form than that of the man whom he believed to be his rival. Ralph was a talented youth, of a generous and ardent nature; and he had only made the discovery of a deep attachment for the lovely Fanny, with the advent of Captain Alendale at Sunnymeade. Benjie and Emily were at Uncle John's left hand, who presided at the other end of the richly-appointed supper-table, with Mrs. Huntington, his unwilling partner, at his right.

Christmas at Sunnymeade Hall.

Benjie's eager gaze was fixed upon his uncle's face, as his father began his farewell speech in the simple language of his own good heart. When the Squire rose to return thanks for the generous enthusiasm with which his own and his wife's health had been received, a deep silence prevailed in the room, and the clear accents of his ringing voice, mellowed but not impaired by time, went to the hearts of his hearers in the following words:—

'I have to thank you most cordially, my good friends and neighbours, for the warm and affectionate manner with which the last toast has been received. The occasion, I assure you, is one on which any expression of sympathy comes very straight home to all of us. We have need, I do assure you, of all that you have to give us. My very good friends and neighbours: contrary to my usual custom (which is, as you know, to keep the young people away from the ball-room for as short a time as possible), I am going to intrude for a little time upon your patience; but you will excuse me, I know, for I only ask for time to bid you all, in the names of my family and myself, most cordially farewell; and to tell you how it has happened that I find myself an impoverished, if not a ruined man, at the very height of my seeming prosperity. Experience, they say, makes us all wise, but some of us purchase it more dearly than others. I have been fool enough to stand surety for a friend, but I am not knave enough to rob my children of their birthright, or to make them suffer the consequences of their father's folly. They have agreed to help me in the plan to which their dear mother has also nobly agreed: we are going away for ten years—away from Sunnymeade, and from the good friends and neighbours whom we have lived happily amongst for so long. I could not speak of it so calmly, or face it so bravely, if I had not been supported by the feeling of *right* in the matter. I have been a fool in the eyes of the world, I know, but in the eyes of God, and of those friends who have it in them to rally round a fallen house, I can truly say

that I have been nothing more. I have "come to grief," my friends, as the saying is, but I can bear it, and am authorized to say, in all our names, that we can *all* bear it, if you will let us have once again before we go, the ringing cheer which has so often re-echoed at this season under the roof of our dear old home; if you will drink, with three times three, the toast of "Our happy return."

The secret was out, the fact was made known, and many a face had grown pale, and many an eye had drooped, as the voice of the Squire had more than once faltered, and had fairly broken down in his old attempt at fun, when he said, I have 'come to grief.'

But there was one among that assemblage whose eye grew brighter and whose bearing prouder, as each word fell from his brother-in-law's lips; and that eye, and that bearing belonged to none other than the poor relation, to whom the place of honour had been given at hospitable Sunnymeade. As the echoes of the last cheer died away, and as Mrs. Woodbine and her daughters, Fanny and Magdalene, strove hard to keep down the rebellious choking in their throats, and as Benjie and Emily sobbed aloud, he rose from his chair, and in clear, strong accents made the following speech to the assembled guests:—

'Ladies and gentlemen: if there is one more worthy of your honour and respect than another in this room, it is the man who sits at the head of this table, whom I am proud to call brother, and who is a thousand times dearer to us all in this, his moment of adversity, than when he sat amongst us prosperous and prospering, the open-handed, large-hearted Squire of Sunnymeade Hall. He has made his claim upon your patience, to tell you simply and shortly of his broken and altered fortunes; let me bespeak the same patience for a few minutes whilst I tell you a plain unvarnished tale, in which, I think, I can promise that you will all be interested. My good friends: there arrived in England, two years ago this Christmas, a man broken in health, with ruined prospects and

soured temper, a very unfavourable specimen of that unfavoured class, coming under the head of "poor relations." To make matters worse, he was a cynic at heart, to whom the world, with the careless *bonhomie* which distinguishes it, had administered, in its devil-may-care, easy sort of way, more kicks than halfpence. But strange to say, ladies and gentlemen, this man, with all his faults upon his head, was just the sort of man that Squire Woodbine (with the harmless eccentricity which characterizes him) found out that he liked. He has just now told us that he will be considered a fool in the eyes of the world, and we all believed him: he is the sort of man to "come to grief;" he is the sort of man to be considered a fool; he is the sort of man whose princely generosity and noble nature are a riddle to read, to which the world can give but one solution, and that is that "the man is a lunatic." But is it not also true, my friends, that this is the very sort of man whom we can least afford to lose from amongst us? This poor-relation-befriending, simple-minded,

noble-natured member of our society must not for very shame be allowed to "come to grief."

'Ladies and gentlemen: I have one more toast to propose; it is an eccentric one, but poor relations and dependents become unlike other people; let us drink to the health of the "poor relation," to the health "of the reformed cynic," "of the ruined stranger," who chose this underhand manner of becoming acquainted with you all, and who is not likely to let Squire Woodbine and his family depart from Sunny-meade when it lies in his power to show his gratitude more substantially than in words, and when he has a balance standing over at his bankers to the amount of *half a million of money*. It was a field lying fallow, in which the good deeds and the kind words of noble natures have been sown for the last two years. That they may spring up and bear fruit abundantly, is the prayer of the "poor relation," in whose behalf I have bespoken your kindness and your forbearance this night.'

CHRISTMAS WITH THE BARON:

A RATHER REMARKABLE FAIRY TALE.

ONCE upon a time—fairy tales always begin with once upon a time, you know—once upon a time there lived in a fine old castle on the Rhine, a certain Baron von Schrochslofsleschshoffinger. You won't find it an easy name to pronounce; in fact, the Baron never tried it himself but once, and then he was laid up for two days afterwards; so in future we'll merely call him 'The Baron,' for shortness, particularly as he was rather a dumpy man. After having heard his name, you won't be surprised when I tell you that he was an exceedingly bad character. For a German baron, he was considered enormously rich; a hundred and fifty pounds a year wouldn't be thought much over here; but still it will buy a good deal of sausage, which,

with wine grown on the estate, formed the chief sustenance of the Baron and his family. Now you'll hardly believe that, notwithstanding he was the possessor of this princely revenue, the Baron was not satisfied but, oppressed and ground down his unfortunate tenants to the very last penny he could possibly squeeze out of them. In all his exactions he was seconded and encouraged by his steward, Klootz, an old rascal who took a malicious pleasure in his master's cruelty, and who chuckled and rubbed his hands with the greatest apparent enjoyment when any of the poor landholders couldn't pay their rent, or afforded him any opportunity for oppression. Not content with making the poor tenants pay double value for the land they

rented, the Baron was in the habit of going round every now and then to their houses, and ordering anything he took a fancy to, from a fat pig to a pretty daughter, to be sent up to the castle. The pretty daughter was made parlour-maid, but as she had nothing a year, and to find herself, it wasn't what would be considered by careful mothers an eligible situation. The fat pig became sausage, of course. Things went on from bad to worse, till at the time of our story, between the alternate squeezings of the Baron and his steward, the poor tenants had very little left to squeeze out of them. The fat pigs and the pretty daughters had nearly all found their way up to the castle, and there was little else to take. The only help the poor fellows had, was the Baron's only daughter, Lady Bertha, who always had a kind word, and frequently something more substantial, for them, when her father was not in the way. Now I'm not going to describe Bertha, for the simple reason that if I did, you would imagine that she was the fairy I'm going to tell you about, and she isn't. However, I don't mind giving you a few outlines. In the first place, she was exceedingly tiny—the nicest girls, the real loveable little pets, always are tiny—and she had long silken black hair, and a dear, dimpled little face, full of love and mischief. Now then, fill up the outline with the details of the nicest and prettiest girl you know, and you'll have a slight idea of her. On second thoughts, I don't believe you will, for your portrait wouldn't be half good enough; however, it'll be near enough for you. Well, the Baron's daughter being all your fancy painted her, and a trifle more, was naturally much distressed at the goings on of her unamiable parent, and tried her best to make amends for her father's harshness. She generally managed that a good many pounds of the sausage should find their way back to the owners of the original pig; and when the Baron tried to squeeze the hand of the pretty parlour-maid, which he occasionally did after dinner, Bertha had only to say, in a

tone of mild remonstrance, 'Pa!' and pa dropped the hand like a hot potato, and stared very hard the other way, instantly. Bad as the disreputable old Baron was, he had a respect for the goodness and purity of his child. Like the lion, tamed by the charm of Una's innocence, the rough old rascal seemed to lose in her presence half his rudeness; and though he used awful language to her sometimes (I dare say even Una's lion roared occasionally) he was more tractable with her than with any other living being. Her presence operated as a moral restraint upon him, which possibly was the reason that he never stayed down stairs after dinner, but always retired to a favourite turret, where he could get comfortably tipsy, which, I regret to say, he had got so in the way of doing every afternoon, that I believe he would have felt unwell without.

The hour of the Baron's afternoon symposium was the time selected by Bertha for her errands of charity. Once he was fairly settled down to his second bottle, off went Bertha, with her maid beside her carrying a basket to bestow a meal on some of the poor tenants, among whom she was always received with blessings. At first these excursions had been undertaken solely from charitable motives, and Bertha thought herself plentifully repaid in the love and thanks of her grateful pensioners. Of late, however, another cause had led her to take even stronger interest in her walks, and occasionally to come in with brighter eyes and a rosier cheek than the gratitude of the poor tenants had been wont to produce. The fact is, some months before the time of our story, Bertha had noticed in her walks a young artist, who seemed to be fated to be invariably sketching points of interest in the road she had to take. There was one particular tree, exactly in the path which led from the castle gate, which he had sketched from at least four points of view, and Bertha began to wonder what there could be so very particular about it. At last, just as Carl von Sempach had begun to consider where on earth

he could sketch the tree from next, and to ponder seriously upon the feasibility of climbing up into it, and taking it from *that* point of view, a trifling accident occurred which gave him the opportunity of making Bertha's acquaintance, which, I don't mind stating confidentially, was the very thing he had been waiting for. It so chanced, that on one particular afternoon the maid, either through awkwardness, or possibly through looking more at the handsome painter than the ground she was walking on, stumbled and fell. Of course the basket fell too, and equally of course, Carl, as a gentleman, couldn't do less than offer his assistance in picking up the damsel and the dinner.

The acquaintance thus commenced was not suffered to drop; and handsome Carl and our good little Bertha were fairly over head and ears in love, and had begun to have serious thoughts of a cottage in a wood, et cætera, when their felicity was disturbed by their being accidentally met, in one of their walks, by the Baron. Of course the Baron, being himself so thorough an aristocrat, had higher views for his daughter than marrying her to a 'beggary artist,' and accordingly he stamped and swore, and threatened Carl with summary punishment with all sorts of weapons, from heavy boots to blunderbusses, if ever he ventured near the premises again. This was unpleasant; but I fear it didn't *quite* put a stop to the young people's interviews, though it made them less frequent and more secret than before.

Now I'm quite aware this wasn't at all proper, and that no properly-regulated young lady would ever have had meetings with a young man her papa didn't approve of. But then it's just possible Bertha mightn't have been a properly-regulated young lady; I only know she was a dear little pet, worth twenty model young ladies, and that she loved Carl very dearly. And then consider what a dreadful old tyrant of a papa she had! My dear girl, it's not the slightest use your looking so provokingly correct; it's my deliberate belief that if you had

been in her shoes (they'd have been at least three sizes too small for you; but that doesn't matter) you would have done precisely the same.

Such was the state of things on Christmas Eve in the year ————stay! fairy tales never have a year to them; so on second thoughts I wouldn't tell the date if I knew—but I don't. Such was the state of things, however, on the particular 24th of December to which our story refers—only, if anything, rather more so. The Baron had got up in the morning in an exceedingly bad temper; and those about him had felt its effects all through the day. His two favourite wolf-hounds, Lut-zow and Teufel, had received so many kicks from the Baron's heavy boots that they hardly knew at which end their tails were; and even Klootz himself scarcely dared to approach his master. In the middle of the day two of the principal tenants came to say that they were unprepared with their rent, and to beg for a little delay. The poor fellows represented that their families were starving, and entreated for mercy; but the Baron was only too glad that he had at last found so fair an excuse for venting his ill-humour. He loaded the unhappy defaulters with every abusive epithet he could devise (and being called names in German is no joke, I can tell you); and, lastly, he swore by everything he could think of that if their rent was not paid on the morrow, themselves and their families should be turned out of doors to sleep on the 'snow, which was then many inches deep on the ground. They still continued to beg for mercy, till the Baron became so exasperated that he determined to kick them out of the castle himself. He pursued them for that purpose as far as the outer door, when fresh fuel was added to his anger. Carl, who, as I have hinted, still managed, notwithstanding the paternal prohibition, to see fair Bertha occasionally, and had come to wish her a merry Christmas, chanced at this identical moment to be saying good-bye at the door, above which, in accordance with immemorial usage, a huge bush of mistletoe was sus-

pended. What they were doing under it at the moment of the Baron's appearance, I never knew exactly; but his wrath was tremendous! I regret to say that his language was unparliamentary in the extreme. He swore till he was mauve in the face; and if he had not providentially been seized with a fit of coughing, and sat down in the coal-scuttle—mistaking it for a three-legged stool—it is impossible to say to what lengths his feelings might have carried him. Carl and Bertha picked him up, rather black behind, but otherwise not much the worse for his accident. In fact, the diversion of his thoughts seemed to have done him good; for, having sworn a little more, and Carl having left the castle, he appeared rather better. After having endured so many and various emotions, it is hardly to be wondered at that the Baron required some consolation; so, after having changed his tr—s—rs, he took himself off to his favourite turret, to allay by 'copious potations the irritation of his mind. Bottle after bottle was emptied, and pipe after pipe was filled and smoked. The fine old Burgundy was gradually getting into the Baron's head; and altogether he was beginning to feel more comfortable. The shades of the winter afternoon had deepened into the evening twilight, made dimmer still by the aromatic clouds that came, with dignified deliberation, from the Baron's lips, and curled and floated up to the carved ceiling of the turret, where they spread themselves into a dim canopy, which every successive cloud brought lower and lower. The fire, which had been piled up mountain-high earlier in the afternoon, and had flamed and roared to its heart's content ever since, had now got to that state—the perfection of a fire to a lazy man—when it requires no poking or attention of any kind, but just burns itself hollow, and then tumbles in, and blazes jovially for a little time, and then settles down to a genial glow, and gets hollow and tumbles in again. The Baron's fire was just in this delightful 'da capo' condition, most favourable of all to the enjoyment of the 'dolce far

niente.' For a little while it would glow and kindle quietly, making strange faces to itself, and building fantastic castles in the depths of its red recesses, and then the castles would come down with a crash, and the faces disappear, and a bright flame spring up and lick lovingly the sides of the old chimney; and the carved heads of improbable men and impossible women, hewn so deftly round the panels of the old oak wardrobe opposite, in which the Baron's choicest vintages were deposited, were lit up by the flickering light, and seemed to nod and wink at the fire in return, with the familiarity of old acquaintances.

Some such fancy as this was disporting itself in the Baron's brain; and he was gazing at the old oak carving accordingly, and emitting huge volumes of smoke with reflective slowness, when a clatter among the bottles on the table caused him to turn his head to ascertain the cause. The Baron was by no means a nervous man; however, the sight that met his eyes when he turned round, did take away his presence of mind a little; and he was obliged to take four distinct puffs before he had sufficiently regained his equilibrium to inquire, 'Who the—Pickwick—are you?' (The Baron said 'Dickens,' but as that is a naughty word we will substitute 'Pickwick,' which is equally expressive, and not so wrong.) Let me see; where was I? Oh, yes. 'Who the Pickwick are you?'

Now, before I allow the Baron's visitor to answer the question, perhaps I had better give a slight description of his personal appearance. If this wasn't a true story, I should have liked to have made him a model of manly beauty; but a regard for veracity compels me to confess that he was not what would be generally considered handsome; that is, not in figure, for his face was by no means unpleasing. His body was in size and shape not very unlike a huge plum-pudding, and was clothed in a bright-green tightly-fitting doublet with red holly berries for buttons. His limbs were long and slender in proportion to his stature, which was not more than three feet or so. His head

was encircled by a crown of holly and mistletoe. The round red berries sparkled amid his hair, which was silver-white, and shone out in cheerful harmony with his rosy jovial face. And that face! it

would have done one good to look at it. In spite of the silver hair, and an occasional wrinkle beneath the merry laughing eyes, it seemed brimming over with perpetual youth. The mouth, well garnished with

teeth, white and sound, which seemed as if they could do ample justice to holiday cheer, was ever open with a beaming genial smile, expanding now and then into hearty jovial laughter. Fun and good-fellowship were in every feature. The owner of the face was, at the moment when the Baron first perceived him, comfortably seated upon the top of the large tobacco-jar on the table, nursing his left leg. The Baron's somewhat abrupt inquiry did not appear to irritate him; on the contrary, he seemed rather amused than otherwise.

'You don't ask prettily, old gentleman,' he replied; 'but I don't mind telling you, for all that. I'm King Christmas.'

'Eh?' said the Baron.

'Ah!' said the goblin. 'Of course you've guessed he was a goblin.'

'And pray what's your business here?' said the Baron.

'Don't be crusty with a fellow,' replied the goblin. 'I merely looked in to wish you the compliments of the season. Talking of crust, by the way, what sort of a tap is it you're drinking?' So saying, he took up a flask of the Baron's very best and poured out about half a glass. Having held the glass first to one side and then the other, winked at it twice, sniffed it, and gone through the remainder of the pantomime in which connoisseurs indulge, he drank it with great deliberation, and smacked his lips

scientifically. 'Hum! Johannisberg! and not so *very* bad—for you. But I tell you what it is, Baron, you'll have to bring out better stuff than this when *I* put my legs on your mahogany.'

'Well, you are a cool fish,' said the Baron. 'However, you're rather a joke, so now you're here we may as well enjoy ourselves. Smoke?'

'Not anything you're likely to offer me!'

'Confound your impudence!' roared the Baron, with a horribly complicated oath. 'That tobacco's as good as any in all Rhineland.'

'That's a nasty cough you've got, Baron. Don't excite yourself, my dear boy; I dare say you speak according to your lights. I don't mean Vesuvians, you know, but your opportunities for knowing anything about it. Try a weed out of my case, and I expect you'll alter your opinion.'

The Baron took the proffered case, and selected a cigar. Not a word was spoken till it was half consumed, when the Baron took it for the first time from his lips, and said gently, with the air of a man communicating an important discovery in the strictest confidence, 'Das ist gut!'

'Thought you'd say so,' said the visitor. 'And now, as you like the cigar, I should like you to try a thimbleful of what *I* call wine. I must warn you, though, that it is rather potent, and may produce effects you are not accustomed to.'

'Bother that, if it's as good as the weed,' said the Baron; 'I haven't taken my usual quantity by four bottles yet.'

'Well, don't say I didn't warn you, that's all. I don't think you'll find it unpleasant, though it is rather strong when you're not accustomed to it.' So saying, the goblin produced from some mysterious pocket a black big-bellied bottle, crusted apparently with the dust of ages. It did strike the Baron as peculiar, that the bottle, when once produced, appeared nearly as big round as the goblin himself; but he was not the sort of man to stick at trifles, and he pushed forward his glass to be filled just as

composedly as if the potion had been shipped by Sandeman, and paid duty in the most commonplace way.

The glass was filled and emptied, but the Baron uttered not his opinion. Not in words, at least, but he pushed forward his glass to be filled again in a manner that sufficiently bespoke his approval.

'Aha, you smile!' said the goblin. And it was a positive fact; the Baron was smiling; a thing he hadn't been known to do in the memory of the oldest inhabitant. 'That's the stuff to make your hair curl, isn't it?'

'I believe you, my b-o-o-oy!' The Baron brought out this earnest expression of implicit confidence with true Paul Bedford unction. 'It warms one—*here*!'

Knowing the character of the man, one would have expected him to put his hand upon his stomach. But he didn't; he laid it upon his *heart*.

'The spell begins to operate, I see,' said the goblin. 'Have another glass.'

The Baron had another glass, and another after that. The smile on his face expanded into an expression of such geniality that the whole character of his countenance was changed, and his own mother wouldn't have known him. I doubt myself—inasmuch as she died when he was exactly a year and three months old—whether she would have recognized him under any circumstances; but I merely wish to express that he was changed almost beyond recognition.

'Upon my word,' said the Baron, at length, 'I feel so light I almost think I could dance a hornpipe. I used to once, I know. Shall I try?'

'Well, if you ask my advice,' replied the goblin, 'I should say, decidedly don't. "Barkis is willing," I dare say, but trousers are weak, and you might split 'em.'

'Hang it all,' said the Baron, 'so I might; I didn't think of that. But still I feel as if I must do something juvenile!'

'Ah! that's the effect of your change of nature,' said the goblin. 'Never mind, I'll give you plenty to do, presently.'

'Change of nature! what do you mean, you old conundrum?' said the Baron.

'You're another,' said the goblin. 'But never mind. What I mean is just this. What you are now feeling is the natural consequence of my magic wine, which has changed you into a fairy. That's what's the matter, sir.'

'A fairy! me!' exclaimed the Baron. 'Get out; I'm too fat.'

'Fat! oh, that's nothing. We shall put you in regular training, and you'll soon be slim enough to creep into a lady's stocking. Not that you'll be called upon to do anything of the sort; but I'm merely giving you an idea of your future figure.'

'No, no,' said the Baron; 'me thin! that's too ridiculous. Why, that's worse than being a fairy. You don't mean it, though, do you? I do feel rather peculiar.'

'I do, indeed,' said the visitor. 'You don't dislike it, do you?'

'Well, no, I can't say I do, entirely. It's queer, though, I feel so uncommon friendly. I feel as if I should like to shake hands, or pat somebody on the back.'

'Ah!' said the goblin, 'I know how it is. Rum feeling, when you're not accustomed to it. But come; finish that glass, for we must be off. We've got a precious deal to do before morning, I can tell you. Are you ready?'

'All right,' said the Baron. 'I'm just in the humour to make a night of it.'

'Come along, then,' said the goblin.

They proceeded for a short time in silence along the corridors of the old castle. They carried no candle, but the Baron noticed that everything seemed perfectly light wherever they stood, but relapsed into darkness as soon as they had passed by. The goblin spoke first.

'I say, Baron, you've been an uncommon old brute in your time, now, haven't you?'

'H'm,' said the Baron, reflectively, 'I don't know. Well, yes, I rather think I have.'

'How jolly miserable you've been making those two young people,

you old sinner! You know who I mean.'

'Eh, what? You know that, too?' said the Baron.

'Know it; of course I do. Why, bless your heart, I know everything, my dear boy. But you *have* made yourself an old pig in that quarter, considerably. Arn't you blushing, you hardhearted old monster?'

'Don't know, I'm sure,' said the Baron, scratching his nose, as if that was where he expected to feel it. I believe I have treated them badly, though, now I come to think of it.'

At this moment they reached the door of Bertha's chamber. The door opened of itself at their approach.

'Come along,' said the goblin, 'you won't wake her. Now, old flinty-heart, look there.'

The sight that met the Baron's view was one that few fathers could have beheld without affectionate emotion. Under ordinary circumstances, however, the Baron would not have felt at all sentimental on the subject, but to-night something made him view things in quite a different light to that he was accustomed to. I shouldn't like to make affidavit of the fact, but it's my positive impression that he sighed.

Now, my dear reader—particularly if a gentleman—don't imagine I'm going to indulge your impertinent curiosity with an elaborate description of the sacred details of a lady's sleeping apartment. You're not a fairy, you know, and I don't see that it can possibly matter to you whether fair Bertha's dainty little bottines were tidily placed on the chair by her bedside, or thrown carelessly, as they had been taken off, upon the hearth-rug, where her favourite spaniel reposed, warming his nose in his sleep before the last smouldering embers of the decaying fire; or whether her crinoline—but if she did wear a crinoline, what can that possibly matter, sir, to you? All I shall tell you is, that everything looked snug and comfortable; but somehow, any place got that look when Bertha was in it. And now a word about the jewel in the casket—pet Bertha herself. Really, I'm at a loss to describe her. How do you look when you're asleep?—

Well, it wasn't like *that*; not a bit! Fancy a sweet girl face, the cheek faintly flushed with a soft warm tint, like the blush in the heart of the opening rose, and made brighter by the contrast of the snowy pillow on which it rested; dark silken hair, curling and clustering lovingly over the tiniest of tiny ears, and the softest, whitest neck that ever mortal maiden was blessed with; long silken eyelashes, fringing lids only less beautiful than the dear earnest eyes they cover. Fancy all this, and fancy, too, if you can, the expression of perfect goodness and purity that lit up the sweet features of the slumbering maiden with a beauty almost angelic, and you will see what the Baron saw that night. Not quite all, however, for the Baron's vision paused not at the bedside before him, but had passed on from the face of the sleeping maiden to another face as lovely, that of the young wife, Bertha's mother, who had, years before, taken her angel beauty to the angels.

The goblin spoke to the Baron's thought. 'Wonderfully like her, is she not, Baron?' The Baron slowly inclined his head.

'You made her very happy, didn't you?' The tone in which the goblin spoke was harsh and mocking. 'A faithful husband, tender and true! She must have been a happy wife, eh, Baron?'

The Baron's head had sunk upon his bosom. Old recollections were thronging into his awakened memory. Solemn vows to love and cherish, somewhat strangely kept. Memories of bitter words, and savage oaths, showered at a quiet uncomplaining figure, without one word in reply. And last, the memory of a fit of drunken passion, and a hasty blow struck with a heavy hand; and then of three months fading away; and last, of her last prayer—for her baby and him.

'A good husband makes a good father, Baron. No wonder you are somewhat chary of rashly entrusting to a suitor the happiness of a sweet flower like this. Poor child! it is hard, though, that she must think no more of him she loves so dearly. See! she is weeping even in her

dreams. But you have good reasons, no doubt. Young Carl is wild, perhaps, or drinks, or gambles, eh? What! none of these? Perhaps he is wayward and uncertain, and you fear that the honied words of courtship might turn to bitter sayings in matrimony. They do, sometimes, eh, Baron? By all means guard her from such a fate as that. Poor tender flower! Or who knows, worse than that, Baron! Hard words break no bones, they say, but angry men are quick, and a blow is soon struck, eh?'

The goblin had drawn nearer and nearer, and laid his hand upon the Baron's arm, and the last words were literally hissed into his ear. The Baron's frame swayed to and fro under the violence of his emotions. At last, with a cry of agony, he dashed his hands upon his forehead. The veins were swollen up like thick cords, and his voice was almost inarticulate in its unnatural hoarseness.

'Torturer, release me! Let me go, let me go and do something to forget the past; or I shall go mad or die!'

He rushed out of the room and paced wildly down the corridor, the goblin following him. At last, as they came near the outer door of the castle, which opened of itself as they reached it, the spirit spoke:

'This way, Baron, this way; I told you there was work for us to do before morning. you know.'

'Work!' exclaimed the Baron, absently, passing his fingers through his tangled hair; 'Oh, yes, work! the harder and the rougher the better; anything to make me forget.'

The two stepped out into the courtyard, and the Baron shivered, though, as it seemed, unconsciously, at the breath of the frosty midnight air. The snow lay deep on the ground, and the Baron's heavy boots sank into it with a crisp, crushing sound at every tread. He was bareheaded, but seemed unconscious of the fact, and tramped on, as if utterly indifferent to anything but his own thoughts. At last, as a blast of the night wind, keener than ordinary, swept over him, he seemed for the first time to feel the

chill. His teeth chattered, and he muttered, 'Cold, very cold.'

'Ay, Baron,' said the goblin, 'it is cold, even to us, who are healthy and strong, and warmed with wine. Colder still, though, to those who are hungry and half-naked, and have to sleep on the snow.'

'Sleep? snow?' said the Baron. 'Who sleeps on the snow? why, I wouldn't let my dogs be out on such a night as this.'

'Your dogs, no!' said the goblin; 'I spoke of meaner animals—your wretched tenants. Did you not order yesterday, that Wilhelm and Friedrich, if they did not pay their rent to-morrow, should be turned out to sleep on the snow? a snug bed for the little ones, and a nice white coverlet, eh? Ha! ha! twenty florins or so is no great matter, is it? I'm afraid their chance is small, nevertheless. Come and see.'

The Baron hung his head. A few minutes brought them to the first of the poor dwellings, which they entered noiselessly. The fireless grate, the carpetless floor, the broken window-panes, all gave sufficient testimony to the want and misery of the occupants. In one corner lay sleeping a man, a woman, and three children, and nestling to each other for the warmth which their ragged coverlet could not afford. In the man, the Baron recognized his tenant, Wilhelm, one of those who had been with him to beg for indulgence on the previous day. The keen features, and bones almost starting through the pallid skin, showed how heavily the hand of hunger had been laid upon all. The cold night wind moaned and whistled through the many flaws in the ill-glazed, ill-thatched tenement, and rustled over the sleepers, who shivered even in their sleep.

'Ha, Baron,' said the goblin, 'Death is breathing in their faces even now, you see; it is hardly worth while to lay them to sleep in the snow, is it? They would sleep a little sounder, that's all.'

The Baron shuddered, and then, hastily pulling the warm coat from his own shoulders, he spread it over the sleepers.

'Oho!' said the goblin, 'bravely

done, Baron! By all means keep them warm to-night, they'll enjoy the snow more to-morrow, you know.'

Strange to say, the Baron, instead of feeling chilled when he had removed his coat, felt a strange glow of warmth spread from the region of the heart over his entire frame. The goblin's continual allusions to his former intention, which he had by this time totally relinquished, hurt him, and he said, rather pathetically, 'Don't talk of that again, good goblin, I'd rather sleep on the snow myself.'

'Eh! what?' said the goblin, 'you don't mean to say you're sorry? Then what do you say to making these poor people comfortable?'

'With all my heart,' said the Baron, 'if we had only anything to do it with.'

'You leave that to me,' said the goblin, 'your brother fairies are not far off, you may be sure.'

As he spoke he clapped his hands thrice, and before the third clap had died away, the poor cottage was swarming with tiny figures, whom the Baron rightly conjectured to be the fairies themselves.

Now you may not be aware (the Baron wasn't until that night) that there are among the fairies trades and professions, just as with ordinary mortals. However, there they were, each with the accompaniments of his or her particular business, and to it they went manfully. A fairy glazier put in new panes to the shattered windows, fairy carpenters replaced the doors upon their hinges, and fairy painters, with inconceivable celerity, made cupboards and closets as fresh as paint could make them; one fairy housemaid laid and lit a roaring fire, while another dusted and rubbed chairs and tables to a miraculous degree of brightness; a fairy butler uncorked bottles of fairy wine, and a fairy cook laid out a repast of most tempting appearance. The Baron, hearing a tapping above him, cast his eyes upwards and beheld a fairy slater rapidly repairing a hole in the roof; and when he bent them down again, they fell on a fairy doctor mixing a cordial for the sleepers. Nay, there

was even a fairy parson, who, not having any present employment, contented himself with rubbing his hands and looking pleasant, probably waiting till somebody might want to be christened or married. Every trade, every profession or occupation, appeared, without exception, to be represented; nay, we beg pardon, with one exception only, for the Baron used to say, when afterwards relating his experiences to bachelor friends, 'You may believe me or not, sir, there was every mortal business under the sun, *but devil a bit of a lawyer.*'

The Baron could not long remain inactive. He was rapidly seized with a violent desire to do something to help, which manifested itself in insane attempts to assist everybody at once. At last, after having taken all the skin off his knuckles in attempting to hammer in nails in aid of the carpenters, and then nearly tumbling over a fairy housemaid, whose broom he was offering to carry, he gave it up as a bad job, and stood aside with his friend the goblin. He was just about to inquire how it was that the poor occupants of the house were not awakened by so much din, when a fairy Sam Slick, who had been examining the cottager's old clock, with a view to a thorough repair, touched some spring within it, and it made the usual purr preparatory to striking. When lo and behold, at the very first stroke, cottage, goblin, fairies, and all disappeared into utter darkness, and the Baron found himself in his turret-chamber, rubbing his toe, which he had just hit with considerable force against the fender. As he was only in his slippers, the concussion was unpleasant, and the Baron rubbed his toe for a good while. After he had finished with his toe, he rubbed his nose, and finally, with a countenance of deep reflection, scratched the bump of something or other at the top of his head. The old clock on the stairs was striking three, and the fire had gone out. The Baron reflected for a short time longer, and finally decided that he had better go to bed, which he did accordingly.

The morning dawned upon the very ideal, as far as weather was concerned, of a Christmas Day. A bright winter sun shone out just vividly enough to make everything look genial and pleasant, and yet not with sufficient warmth to mar the pure unbroken surface of the crisp white snow, which lay like a never-ending white lawn upon the ground, and glittered in myriad silver flakes upon the leaves of the sturdy evergreens. I'm afraid the Baron had not had a very good night; at any rate, I know that he was wide-awake at an hour long before his usual time of rising. He lay first on one side, and then on the other, and then, by way of variety, turned on his back, with his magenta nose pointing perpendicularly towards the ceiling; but it was all of no use. Do what he would, he couldn't get to sleep, and at last, not long after daybreak, he tumbled out of bed, and proceeded to dress. Even after he was out of bed his fidgetiness continued. It did not strike him, until after he had got one boot on, that it would be a more natural proceeding to put his stockings on first; after which he caught himself in the act of trying to put his trousers on over his head; (which, I may mention for the information of lady readers, who, of course, cannot be expected to know anything about such matters, is not the mode most generally adopted). In a word, the Baron's mind was evidently preoccupied; his whole air was that of a man who felt a strong impulse to do something or other, but could not quite make up his mind to it. At last, however, the good impulse conquered, and this wicked old Baron, in the stillness of the calm bright Christmas morning, went down upon his knees and prayed. Stiff were his knees and slow his tongue, for neither had done such work for many a long day past; but I have read in the Book, of the joy of the angels over a repenting sinner. There needs not much eloquence to pray the Publican's Prayer, and who shall say but there was gladness in heaven that Christmas morning?

The Baron's appearance down-

stairs at such an early hour occasioned quite a commotion. Nor were the domestics reassured when the Baron ordered a bullock to be killed and jointed instantly, and all the available provisions in the larder, including sausage, to be packed up in baskets, with a good store of his own peculiar wine. One ancient retainer was heard to declare, with much pathos, that he feared master had gone 'off his head.' However, 'off his head' or not, they knew the Baron must be obeyed, and in an exceedingly short space of time he sallied forth, accompanied by three servants carrying the baskets, and wondering what in the name of fortune their master would do next. He stopped at the cottage of Wilhelm, which he had visited with the goblin on the previous night. The labours of the fairies did not seem to have produced much lasting benefit, for the appearance of everything around was as wretched as could be. The poor family thought that the Baron had come himself to turn them out of house and home; and the poor children huddled up timidly to their mother for protection, while the father attempted some words of entreaty for mercy. The pale, pinched features of the group, and their looks of dread and wretchedness, were too much for the Baron. 'Eh! what! what do you mean, confound you? Turn you out! Of course not: I've brought you some breakfast. Here! Fritz—Carl; where are the knaves? Now then, unpack, and don't be a week about it. Can't you see the people are hungry, ye villains? Here, lend me the corkscrew.' This last being a tool the Baron was tolerably accustomed to, he had better success than with those of the fairy carpenters: and it was not long before the poor tenants were seated before a roaring fire, and doing justice, with the appetite of starvation, to a substantial breakfast. The Baron felt a queer sensation in his throat at the sight of the poor people's enjoyment, and had passed the back of his hand twice across his eyes when he thought no one was looking; but his emotion fairly rose to boiling point when the poor

father, Wilhelm, with tears in his eyes, and about a quarter of a pound of beef in his mouth, sprang up from the table and flung himself at the Baron's knees, invoking blessings on him for his goodness. 'Get up, you audacious scoundrel!' roared the Baron. 'What the deuce do you mean by such conduct, eh! confound you?' At this moment the door opened, and in walked Mynheer Klootz, who had heard nothing of the Baron's change of intentions, and who, seeing Wilhelm at the Baron's feet, and hearing the latter speaking, as he thought, in an angry tone, at once jumped to the conclusion that Wilhelm was entreating for longer indulgence. He rushed at the unfortunate man, and collared him. 'Not if *we* know it,' exclaimed he; 'you'll have the wolves for bedfellows to-night, I reckon. Come along, my fine fellow.' As he spoke he turned his back towards the Baron, with the intention of dragging his victim to the door. The Baron's little gray eyes twinkled, and his whole frame quivered with suppressed emotion, which, after the lapse of a moment, vented itself in a kick, and *such* a kick! Not one of your Varsoviana flourishes, but a kick that employed every muscle from hip to toe, and drove the worthy steward up against the door, like a ball from a catapult. Misfortunes never come singly, and so Mynheer Klootz found with regard to the kick, for it was followed, without loss of time, by several dozen others, as like it as possible, from the Baron's heavy boots. Wounded lions proverbially come badly off, and Fritz and Carl, who had suffered from many an act of petty tyranny on the part of the steward, thought they could not do better than follow their master's example, which they did to such good purpose, that when the unfortunate Klootz did escape from the cottage at last, I don't believe he could have had any *os sacri* left.

After having executed this little act of poetical justice, the Baron and his servants visited the other cottages, in all of which they were received with dread, and dismissed with blessings. Having completed

his tour of charity, the Baron returned home to breakfast, feeling more really contented than he had done for many a long year. He found Bertha, who had not risen when he started, in a considerable state of anxiety as to what he could possibly have been doing. In answer to her inquiries he told her, with a roughness he was far from feeling, to 'mind her own business.' The gentle eyes filled with tears at the harshness of the reply; perceiving which, the Baron was beyond measure distressed, and chucked her under the chin in what was meant to be a very conciliatory manner. 'Eh! what, my pretty? tears? No, surely. Bertha must forgive her old father. I didn't mean it, you know, my pet; and yet, on second thoughts, yes I did, too.' Bertha's face was overcast again. 'My little girl thinks she has no business anywhere, eh! Is that it? Well, then, my pet, suppose you make it your business to write a note to young Carl von Sempach, and say I'm afraid I was rather rude to him yesterday, but if he'll look over it, and come and take a snug family dinner and a slice of the pudding with us to-day——' 'Why, pa, you don't mean—— yes, I do really believe you do——' The Baron's eyes were winking nineteen to the dozen. 'Why, you dear, dear, dear old pa!' And at the imminent risk of upsetting the breakfast table, Bertha rushed at the Baron, and flinging two soft white arms about his neck, kissed him—— oh, how she *did* kiss him! I shouldn't have thought, myself, she could possibly have had any left for Carl; but I dare say Bertha attended to his interests in that respect somehow.

* * * *

Well, Carl came to dinner, and the Baron was, not many years after, promoted to the dignity of a grandpapa, and a very jolly old grandpapa he made. Is that all you wanted to know?

About Klootz? Well, Klootz got over the kicking, but he was dismissed from the Baron's service; and on examination of his accounts, it was discovered that he had been in

the habit of robbing the Baron of nearly a third of his yearly income, which he had to refund; and with the money he was thus compelled to disgorge, the Baron built new cottages for his tenants, and new-stocked their farms. Nor was he the poorer in the end, for his tenants worked with the energy of gratitude, and he was soon many times richer than when the goblin visited him on that Christmas Eve.

And was the goblin ever explained? Certainly not. How dare you have the impertinence to suppose such a thing? An empty bottle, covered with cobwebs, was found the next morning in the turret chamber, which the Baron at first imagined must be the bottle from which the goblin produced his magic wine; but as it was found, on examination, to be labelled 'Old Jamaica Rum,' of course that could not have had anything to do with it. However it was, the Baron never thoroughly enjoyed any other wine after it; and as he did not thenceforth get drunk, on an average, more than two nights a week, or swear more than about eight oaths a day, I think King Christmas may be considered to have thoroughly reformed him. And he always maintained, to the day of his death, that he was changed into a fairy, and became exceedingly angry if contradicted.

Who doesn't believe in fairies after this? I only hope King Christmas may make a few more good fairies this year, to brighten the homes of the poor with the light of Christmas charity. Truly we need not look far for almsmen. Cold and hunger, disease and death, are around us at all times; but at no time do they press more heavily on the poor than at this jovial Christmas season. Shall we shut out, in our mirth and jollity, the cry of the hungry poor? or shall we not rather remember, in the midst of our happy family circles, round our well-filled tables, and before our blazing fires, that our brothers are starving out in the cold, and that the Christmas song of the angels was 'Good-will to men?'

A. J. L.

CHRISTMAS IN A CELLAR.

A Strange Story about a Pantomime.

MORE than three years ago I was sent away from London for the benefit of my health. It would be useless to mention in what breezy spot I spent my exile. Suffice it, that it was highly salubrious, and intolerably dull. I was forbidden to read. Every day seemed to last a week, and every night a

fortnight. How insignificant were the minor annoyances of draughts, pills, irritating under-clothing, and strict regimen, compared to that intolerable ennui!

What a thrill of pleasure I felt when a long strip of yellow paper informed me that the 'Theatre Royal — would shortly open for

a limited season.' Here was occupation for my dreary evenings. The Theatre Royal — *did* open, and I commenced an acquaintance with the 'Acting Drama,' as published by Cumberland. After the performance, I used to smoke a cigar (tobacco was strictly forbidden, but I smoked nevertheless) in the coffee-room of the Rose and Crown Hotel; and there I met the actor who played the stern parents at the theatre, and was adamant for four acts, only to melt in the fifth, and consent to the union of his son or daughter, as the case might be. He was a very gentlemanly veteran, quite of the old school—took snuff, wore a frill, smiled whenever he was addressed, and had a fatherly manner, acquired by a long course of dramatic pater-nity. He used to tell singular anecdotes, more or less true, some of them much less than more; among others, one which I thought interesting enough, having obtained his 'kind permission,' to reproduce. I give it in his own words:

'Suckport is a seaport town,' he began, 'situate—as guide-books say—four miles from the sea, and everything in Suckport is of the sea, fishy, from the gilt three-masted ship on the vane over the Town Hall to the rope-walks, timber-yards, and old boats in the outskirts. Every man with money, no matter what his pursuits, keeps a yacht; and it would almost seem as if the small fry of fishermen's children were weaned on boat-hooks.

'The Suckport theatre (I mean the old theatre, for I am speaking of the year 18—) stood, as country theatres always do, at the most inconvenient end of a dirty lane—in fact, it stood upon a wharf, and had been a granary, or store, or warehouse, or something of that sort: the wall at the end that was used for the stage went right down into the dirty river, which, as you might see by the wet space between high and low water-mark, washed it with refuse twice a day.

'It was just eleven o'clock, and a rainy morning, as I picked my steps over the petrified kidneys that did *not* pave the lane that led to the stage-door. It was a melancholy

lane, beginning with a little chapel rented by the Primitive Muggletonians (junior branch), then going into stables and back premises, then asserting itself hideously with a reeking slaughterhouse in the centre, returning to stables and back premises, and terminating with a rabbit-hutch-looking stage-door. Not an object could be seen but a misanthropic cock and three draggle-tailed hens. I walked on to the stage, which was as chill and cheerless as stages usually are on January mornings, and, as I looked into the vacant darkness visible, my old notion came into my head of the likeness of an empty theatre to an empty coffin.

'It was a queer old building, that ex-warehouse that had been converted into a temple of the drama, and among other requirements for the dramatic art, boasted extensive cellarage. Messrs. Cape and Coriander, the great wine merchants, at one time kept all their stock there, until one high tide the water rushed in, smashed the bottles, and so damaged Messrs. Cape and Coriander, that they were forced to turn bankrupts—not that it hurt them, for afterwards they were richer men than ever. Then extensive alterations were made, and thick walls built to keep out the tide; but Messrs. Cape and Coriander never again housed their wine there. I suppose they did not like the water mingling itself in their affairs so publicly.

'Not a soul but myself had thought proper to be punctual for rehearsal. The first call was for "Pizarro" at eleven; the pantomime to follow. Our manager, Mr. O'Warreboyle, never set a good example, and rehearsals usually began at all sorts of hours. Annoyed at having left my comfortable fire, I went back to the stage-door, and stood looking out into the rain.

'Two men stood at the end of the lane. After exchanging a few words, one of them disappeared, and the other tramped up to me.

"This here the playhouse?" he asked.

"This is the *theatre*," I replied, trying to impress him, but failing signally.

"Ah! yes; the-ay-ter, if you like it better," he said. "Mr. O'Warreboyle is manager, isn't he?"

'The coolness of the man's questions and the rudeness of his manner annoyed me. I had played leading business—I was the *Pizarro* of that evening. I therefore looked out into the rain, and feigned not to hear.

"No offence, master," said the man, after a pause, "but Mr. Terence O'Warreboyle is manager, isn't he?"

'Without deigning to turn my head in the direction of his voice, I answered "Yes."

"Is he in the way, master?"

"No."

"Sure?" inquired the man, in a tone of the strongest doubt.

'This was too much! I turned upon my heel and walked back to the stage.

'A few minutes after the prompter, Sticknam, arrived, and shortly after Scudrey and Mrs. Foljambe, who played *Valverde* and *Elvira*.

"Now we can begin," said I.

'I had no sooner uttered the words than I perceived by the light of a long slit or opening in the wall, which let in the cold and the rain, and did duty as a window, that Mrs. Foljambe was in tears. I asked what was the matter.

"Oh! that brute Foljambe!" replied the lady; 'not home till four o'clock this morning, and tipsy as—
augh!' and she began to cry.

'Mrs. Foljambe was older than her husband, and it was said led him a life. The real fact was, Foljambe was a drunken little dog, and spent money faster than his majestic and talented lady could earn it. Personally he was not worth his salt, but he was engaged for the sake of his wife.

"I wish he was dead, I do!" said the poor woman.

"Hush! hush!" said I, "don't say that!"

"But I *do* say it, and I mean it—a little wretch! I shall never know a moment's peace till he has drunk himself into his grave!"

"Hush!" I repeated, for I saw the figures of young Judson and Dossmore emerging from the gloom.

"Will he be here this morning?"

"No; he's in bed, little brute!"

'Rehearsal began. *Ataliba* (Foljambe) was absent, and so was *Rolla* (O'Warreboyle). Sticknam told us that O'W., as we called him, had gone to Dundringham, to arrange about our opening there the following month. O'W. would not have been a bad actor for a manager had he not been afflicted with such a terrible brogue. He had been educated at Trinity College, Dublin—at least he said so. I have never been in Ireland, but I should think Trinity must be a large college, for all the Irishmen I have ever met date from it. "Pizarro" was run through—I mean the rehearsal, not the character—in the usual ramshackle way; and then we commenced the pantomime, in which I went on for the *Demon Singe-his-wig-off*, King of the Subterranean Salamanders. The performance that night was for little Canks's benefit. Canks was our property-man, and never acted except upon his benefit, when he always played clown—which he considered to be a triumph of dramatic art—in fact, he was a disappointed Grimaldi, and I believe would have broken his heart if he had not been permitted to 'clown' once in each town in the circuit.

'I got home about three and dined. My wife looked out my armour, and sent our eldest boy to the hairdresser's with my black-ringlet wig. We expected the pantomime to draw a good house. Old Propper, the great banker, had promised his support. He only visited the theatre twice a season—once at the bespeak of the Conservative member, and once when "Pizarro" was performed, which play he considered the finest modern production of the human mind.

'During the whole of that day I felt an unaccountable depression of spirits that I could not shake off; however, at six o'clock I started for the theatre, my carpet-bag in one hand, and my rapier, muffled in a gun-case, in the other. I should here mention that the stage was on the same level as the ground, and that the gentlemen's dressing-room was immediately under the stage;

the ladies, as was right they should, had a comfortable room over the stage, but our den was the most wretched place conceivable. It had formed part of the cellarage that had been so luckily ruinous to Messrs. Cape and Coriander, and was a dingy hole. Though we put boards over that portion of the brick floor on which we dressed, and made our stove red hot, nothing could keep out the fearful cold, nor the damp, earthy smell, and flavour of wet sawdust, unwashed bottles, and stale river. It was like dressing in a furnished sewer or dry drain; in truth, the cellar was beneath the level of the water at high tide.

'Each actor's dressing-place was lighted by a candle in a tin socket. O'W. would not go to the expense of gas fittings; there was also, for the diffusion of a general light, a hoop suspended from the ceiling with candles stuck in it—a sort of cheap impromptu chandelier, such as is sometimes hung up in dancing-booths at country fairs. To gain this comfortless crypt we had to descend a flight of stone stairs, picturesquely worn and uneven as with heavy coopers and drunken cellarmen. Our dressing-place, or dressing-table, was merely a few stout planks nailed together by the stage carpenter; and it had been a portion of the paternal thoughtfulness of our spirited and enterprising manager to fix this dressing-bench on the opposite side of the cellar to the staircase, which gave us the trouble of crossing a floor whose every clammy brick seemed charged with cramps and rheumatisms, and to be sworn cemented foes to legs and feet encased in silk stockings, thin shoes, fleshings, and Roman sandals.

'Little Canks had a very good house. The Proppers were in the stage-box in regal state, Mr. Prop- per, in the attitude of the county member, with his fat hand thrust into his white waistcoat, and lost among his frill. Every time O'Warreboyle uttered a patriotic sentiment in Dublin English, old Prop- per received it as if it were the toast of the evening, pulled the edge of his box with his disengaged hand,

and cried "Hear, hear!" after the fashion of members of the House of Commons and convivial clubs. The effect was very funny. In the address to the Peruvian army (four of them), O'Warreboyle shouted:

"My br-r-r-eeve associates! Par-r-r-tners in my toils, my feel- ings, and my feeme! Can R-rol- la's wor-r-ds add vigour to the vir- tuous ener-r-gies that inspire your harruts?"

"No! no!" interrupted Prop- per.

"The thr-r-one we honour-r is the people's choice!" proceeded O'W. (*not Rolla*).

"Hear! hear!" said Prop- per.

"The laws that gov-ver-rn us are our brave fawthers' legacee!"

"So they are!" said Prop- per.

"The faith we r-rever-rence teaches us to live in bonds of amites with all mankoind, with surest hope of our Creator's mercee and r-re- war-rud hereafter!"

"Bra-vo! Very good!" from Prop- per.

"Tell your invadthers *this*!"

"Yes! yes!"

"And tell them, too, we seek no change!"

"Hear! he-AR!" said the banker, perhaps thinking of his notes.

"And, *least* of all, such change as THEY would br-r-ing us!"

"BRA-vo!" shouted Prop- per, amid thunders of applause.

O'Warreboyle dared not offend the banker, but I know he *felt* daggers, though he looked none.

The piece went off very well, though that little wretch Foljambe was the tipsiest of *Atalibas*. I ob- served that the eyes of his wife were still red, but she had reached the dignified and majestic degrec of conjugal quarrel, and took not the slightest notice of him, though spurred to it by his remarking whenever she came near him, "Oh! isn't she cross?" The combat be- tween me and that stupid Dossmore was rapturously applauded, and the curtain fell amid great enthusiasm, O'W., as was his custom, insisting in joining in his own dirge, as he lay upon his bier—a butcher's cratch, borrowed from the slaughter- house in the lane.

'After the play, O'W. told me he

had had bad luck at Dundringham, and feared he should not be able to open there. He owed the proprietors a year's rent, and they insisted on payment before reoccupation. O'W. did very well with his six towns, but he was an extravagant man, and gambled fearfully. I tried to cheer him up, and then descended the stone staircase to dress for the demon in the pantomime.

'No sooner had my feet touched the floor than a sudden chill seized them. I looked down and saw that the bricks were wet—there was water at least two inches deep upon them. I asked what was the matter, but nobody seemed to know. Little Canks, dressed as clown, was telling Judson, dressed for harlequin, of his triumph at his last benefit, and how his "leap" had been encored. I sat down in my chair, and took off my wig and leg armour. I was unbuckling my breastplate, when I heard a tremendous noise—a noise as if the whole theatre were falling on us with a terrific crash. With the quick instinct of fear, every man rushed to the staircase. Half across the cellar we were met by a vast volume of water, which, roaring like a furnace, tumbled in upon us, and lashed us back.

'The brickwork of the dam or river wall had given way, and the flood was upon us.

'It rolled in rapidly. We mounted upon the dressing-place, which was about three feet from the ground. The water soon covered our knees, and stole swiftly higher and higher, till it reached my chin. I thought my time had come, when my foot struck against my dressing-case, an article about eighteen inches high. I stood upon it, and, my head and shoulders free, looked out upon the black death around me.

'Had it not been for my poor little dressing-case I should not now be alive to tell this story. As it was, I felt the greatest difficulty in keeping my footing against the strong, powerful, cruel flood.

'The inundation had evidently gained its level. The surface of the water just touched the bottom of

the hoop in which the candles were stuck. The noise ceased, save a lashing and surging at the sides of our wet tomb. Shall I ever forget the sight? The flare of the candles reflected in the black, slimy pool—the low ceiling, the half-light, the filthy smell of the putrescent water, the rolling empty bottles, the floating chairs, the horror and the awe of knowing that the few frail planks on which we stood could not long support our weight. The row of eight living heads against the wall; Canks, with his clown's paint swept off, but the wig, with its three grotesque tails, still sticking out from his ashy, fear-palsied face.

'I felt the boards beneath me crack. I shut my eyes tightly, prepared for death, and prayed to God for myself and my wife and children.

'At that moment we heard a burst of applause above us, and Toll-drum, our low comedian, began his song.

'Some time ago lived near this place,
In one of the streets of the town,
A respectable man, who was called
By the neighbourhood Gentleman Brown.
Very often fine parties he gave,
At which in champagne you might drown;
And 'twas truth and a fact, the whole street
Was jealous of Gentleman Brown.
Jokery—jeery—quiz!
To the story I'm telling, oh! list!
How happy we mortals might be,
If jealousy didn't exist.'

'And the audience, as was their custom, broke into full chorus. I can remember the words now; they are cut into my memory as a name is cut into a tombstone.

'The dreadful truth flashed upon us, that on the stage and in the house they had not heard the crash of the brickwork or the rush of the water; that they knew not of our fate; and we were doomed.

'The planks beneath us still remained firm. I heard a splash. I opened my eyes and looked out upon the poisonous well again. I saw Judson, who had thrown himself into the flood, swimming towards the staircase. At every stroke he was impeded by the chairs, tables, and lumber, floating about him. If he succeeded in gaining the stairs, he

could inform those above of our entombment. To be rescued, assistance must be immediate. In a few minutes, if we escaped drowning, the foul, pent-up air of our dungeon would have stifled us.

'Our lives depended upon Judson. He struck out bravely. We watched him with eager hope and sickening fear. As he swam by the hoop, his foot kicked it, and the candles it contained fell into the putrid flood.

'All was darkness!

'The agony of that moment was supreme!

'In the absence of light to guide him, Judson, even if he kept afloat, could not reach the staircase: then there was the weight of the wet dress and heavy spangles upon his legs and body! I listened! I heard a groan: he had sunk to rise no more.

'“I have been a wicked man,” cried the voice of Canks from out the darkness, “but I repent, and truly. I cannot hold on much longer. Good-bye! God bless you all! We cannot see, but we can hear each other. Say ‘God bless you,’ back again to me.”

“God bless you!” said the voices, slowly and fearfully.

'The solemn words mingled with the repetition of the chorus of the the comic song singing above our heads!

'The vapours of death were rising round us—and what a death! To die to the sound of song and music, pent up in a wet charnel-house. I tried to shout, but my voice failed. I heard a confused sound as of prayer, and joined in it.

'The water gurgled in our ears as we implored speedy death or light!

'A brilliant stream burst in over our heads, and I heard a noise of voices!

'Judson had reached the stage. I heard him say:

“Hold on! Hold on, lads! Here's help! Deliverance!”

'The centre trap in the stage had been opened. Lanthorns were lowered, and I saw them tying planks together to float to us.

'A voice shouted, “There's no time to lose! Here's a rope! jump towards it, and we'll drag you up!”

'At the same moment a rope with a noose in it was lowered; but that end of the trap nearest to us was at a distance of four feet, and consequently there were four feet of water and floating obstructions between us and the rope.

'A number of voices shouted “Leap!” I was nearest, and made the first attempt. Recommending my soul to God, and knowing that my brother-actors would not leave my wife and children to starvation, I closed my eyes, and leapt.

'I caught the rope; my left arm and my head went into the middle of the noose. The shock plunged me down into the filthy water till my feet touched the cellar floor—at the same moment I lost my hold of the rope. I gave myself up, for I feared that they would draw the rope up from me. There was a buzzing in my ears as I thrust forth my arm in desperation. I caught the rope again, and felt myself hauled upwards. Something struck me on the head. The foul water filled my mouth, my senses reeled, and my fear, during those awful moments of immersion, was that I should faint and lose my grasp of the few twisted strands between me and doom. I tried hard to keep my consciousness. It was in vain. All I remember was a sensation of quick motion and of dazzling light.

'When I returned to sense, I found myself lying upon the stage. All my companions had been saved but one—poor tipsy Foljambe.

'It was a strange sight to see us kneel round the closed trap, in our soiled torn stage bravery, and thank Heaven for our deliverance.

“Where is Arthur?” asked Mrs. Foljambe.

'We rose and looked at each other. There was a dead silence.

“Oh!” shrieked the poor woman, who had just heard of our danger, and had run down from her room half dressed. “He is dead! He is dead! He is dead!”

'She tore open the trap, and would have plunged head foremost, had we not held her back. Her screams alarmed the audience, some of whom jumped on to the stage, and came behind the curtain.

'The trap was closed, and the bereaved wife was in a fit of violent hysterics, when a voice was heard to say:

"What's the matter? Has anything happened?"

'It was Foljambe, who had thrown his coat and trousers over his Peruvian dress, and been out to the nearest public-house.

'I pass over a description of how Foljambe was received by his wife; how she sobbed over him, and said, "And to think that this morning I wished you dead, my darling, and how near my wicked wishes were fulfilled!" Foljambe took it all as a tribute to his superior merits, and forgave his wife with heroic self-denial. Years after, when she remonstrated with him, he used to remind her that three pennyworth of gin once saved his life.

"Well," said O'Warreboyle, "let us be thankful nobody's been drowned, for *now we can get on with the pantomime!*"

Here little Canks broke in with tremendous wrath, and rebuked his

manager for daring to wish men that moment rescued from a dreadful death to tumble and make faces, and swore that nothing should induce him 'to clown' that night. O'Warreboyle scowled; but feeling that he had no choice but to yield, was going before the curtain to make an apology, when the two strange men I had seen in the morning, walked up and arrested him.

'Old Propper, in consideration of his noble sentiments as *Rolla*, became his bail. The debt was only 40*l.*, and Sticknam told the audience what had happened. They left the theatre grumbling loudly. They said they had paid their money to see the pantomime, and it was a swindle not to play it.'

'We never acted in the theatre after, but had a benefit at the Town Hall. My wife was very grateful for my escape, and said to me the next day, "What a pity, Adolphus, that your suit of gold-leather armour is entirely spoiled, and will never be fit to wear again!"'

T. W. R.

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

A PILGRIM to the West returned, whose palm-branch, drenched in dew,
Shook off bright drops like childhood's tears when childhood's heart is
new,

Stole up the hills at eventide, like mist in wintry weather,
Where locked in dream-like trance I lay, at rest among the heather.

The red ferns, answering to his tread, sent up a savour sweet;
The yellow gorse, like Magian gold, glowed bright about his feet:
The waving brooms, the winter blooms, each happy voice in air,
Grew great with life and melody, as if a Christ stood there.

Unlike to mortal man was he. His brow rose broad and high:
The peace of Heaven was on his lip, the God-light in his eye;
And rayed with richer glory streamed, through night and darkness shed,
To crown that holy Pilgrim's brow, the one star overhead.

Long gazing on that staff he bore, beholding how it grew,
With sprouts of green, with buds between, and young leaves ever new,
The marvels of the Eastern land I bade him all unfold,
And thus to my impassioned ears the wondrous tale he told.

' Each growth upon that sacred soil where One died not in vain,
Though crushed and shed, though seeming dead, in beauty lives again :
The branching bough the knife may cleave, the root the axe may sever,
But on the ground His presence lighted, nothing dies for ever.

' Where once amid the lowly stalls fell soft the Virgin's tear,
The littered straw 'neath children's feet turns to green wheat in ear.
The corn He pluck'd on sabbath-days, though ne'er it feels the sun,
Though millions since have trod the field, bears fruit for every one.

' The palms that on His way were strewn wave ever in the air ;
From clouded earth to sun-bright heaven they form a leafy stair.
In Cana's bowers the love of man is touched by the Divine ;
And snows that fall on Galilee have still the taste of wine.

' Where thy lost locks, poor Magdalen ! around His feet were rolled,
Still springs in woman's worship-ways the gracious Mary-gold :
Men know when o'er that bowed-down head they hear the angels weeping,
The purer spirit is not dead—not dead, but only sleeping.

' Aloft on blackened Calvary no more the shadows lour :
Where fell the piercing crown of thorns, there blooms a thorn in flower.
Bright on the prickled holy-tree and mistletoe appear,
Reflecting rays of heavenly shine, the blood-drop and the tear.

' The sounding rocks that knew His tread wake up each dead abyss,
Where echoes caught from higher worlds ring gloriously in this :
And, leaning where His voice once filled the Temple where He taught,
The listener's eyes grew spirit-full—full with a heavenly thought.'

The Pilgrim ceased. My heart beat fast. I marked a change of hue ;
As if those more than mortal eyes a soul from God looked through.
Then rising slow as angels rise, and soaring faint and far,
He passed my bound of vision, robed in glory, as a star.

Strange herald-voices filled the air : glad anthems swelled around :
The wakened winds rose eager-voiced, then lapsed in dreamy sound.
It seemed all birds that wintered far, drawn home by some blessed power,
Made music in the Christmas woods, mistaking of the hour.

A new glad spirit raptured me ! I woke to breathe the morn,
With heart fresh-strung to Charity—as though a Christ were born.
Then knew I how each earth-born thought, though tombed in clay it seem,
It bursts the sod, it soars to God, transfigured in a dream.

ELEANORA L. HERVEY.



CHRISTMAS IN WHITECHAPEL:

Mr. Wilkins's Pubbing Club.

I THINK there had not been a hotter day throughout the summer. The pavement was scorching under the white blaze of the August sun, and the bleached cobble-stones of the roadway of Whitechapel High Street stood out bald-looking and shiny, and suggestive of blisters. It was a market day, and the broad-wheeled hay-carts with their fat loads stood in rank in the middle of the highway, the tarry tarpaulins hanging flaccidly about the crisp russet trusses and down on to the gleaming grit-brightened wheel-tires, and over the wheel spokes and over the wheel boxes, dry as touchwood and cored with inflammable material, making a picture which would sorely have tried an incendiary with a match in his pocket had he happened to pass that way. There was

no life in the long cab rank. Except in the case of the first cab, the driver of which sat on his box with his throat bare and comforting himself with a damp wash-leather, not a cabman was to be seen; while the collars hung heavily about the limp necks of the cab horses, and they snorted discontentedly in the depths of their husky nosebags.

Business was stagnant. 'Butchers' Row might have been 'Brokers,' or any other, save for the greasiness of the closed shutters and the big meat-hooks in the doorposts, and the unmistakably butchers' dogs, dozing on the thresholds and in the corners. Screened behind the 'Morning Advertiser,' the baker was comfortably nodding over the political leader; despite the seasonable announcement of 'Rich Pippin

Cyder,' conspicuous in the window of the 'Tray of Hearts,' the doors of that tavern stood fruitlessly ajar, and the penny ice shop could exhibit to the drouthy wayfarer nothing more seductive than some little drops of ill-coloured liquid in a row of fly-spattered glasses. The ice shopkeeper was not visible, but behind the shop was a sort of store-room for lemonade and ginger-beer, dismal but delightfully shady, and on the summit of a stack of cool stone bottles reclined a pair of blucher-boots, and which from the circumstance of their being overlapped by trowser-hems, probably contained the ice shopkeeper's feet. Everybody, everything seemed done up by the excessive heat. Even Mr. Hyams, of the 'Whitechapel Clothing Emporium,' and who by nature was less liable to sunburn than most men, had been compelled to abandon his post at the door, and was to be seen reclining under a shady grove of fashionable paletots, sucking lemons.

Although protected by an umbrella, it was slow work getting over the hot stones; and therefore one had ample leisure to observe these things and many others, but of so kindred a character, that looking for them became tedious; and it was a positive relief to close one's eyes as nearly as was consistent with safety and to jog on, likening the creaking of one's umbrella to the chafing at her moorings of a Twickenham pleasure-boat, and thinking on green rushes and floating with the stream. Had my imaginary voyage been real, and suddenly interrupted by the loosening of the boat's plug, or the sudden grounding on a shelving bank, my astonishment could hardly have been greater than it presently was, for opening my eyes for a good wide look out preparatory to blinking off to Twickenham again, I lighted full on a grocer's shop, with a busy grocer in it.

Yes! the grocer was at work! He of all men! There he was with the sun blazing down upon the broad white blind which overhung his window, illuminating his bald head with a soft and mellow light, such as is reflected on a joint from

a new meat-screen. Up to his elbows in sweets and stickiness, he was tastily arranging his stock—his Jamaica foots, his sparkling lump, his Fow-chow mixture, at three-and-four, as serenely as though it were December.

Why had the grocer selected so preposterous a time for his job? Several moments' reflection failed to provide a satisfactory solution to the mystery, till suddenly the truth flashed to my mind! By observation he had arrived at the knowledge that at the hottest hour of the afternoon, replete with good things, the flies and bluebottles were languid and drowsy, and preferred reposing on the ceiling to the labour of flying! This was his opportunity! His task would be completed before the hungry horde began to stir!

It was impossible to withhold admiration for so subtle a calculator, and halting in the shady lee of a hay-cart which overlooked his premises, I continued to observe him. His stock arranged, he commenced gumming business placards to the inside of his window. He began with the bottom panes and then proceeded to deal with the side ones, leaving the middle space clear. That this space was intended for the reception of one large bill was manifest, for there lay the bill, although with its back towards me, atop of the Patras currants. It was nothing to me what the large bill was about, and I believe it was chiefly because the hay, when closely approached, smelt so fragrant, and because the hay-cart shaft was of such a nice height to rest a corn-afflicted foot on, that I lingered to see the finish of the bill sticking.

He was such a long time gumming it that I was fairly on the way to Twickenham again, when, with a dexterous flourish, he turned the face of the placard to the window, and I was back in a twinkling. *It was about Christmas!* With his sugar liquefying against the glass on which it rested, with his figs revolting against their stifling stowage in their native drums and visibly dissolving partnership, in sight of thousands of fagged and fainting flies and bluebottles, the grocer

was making public the announcement that 'Wilkins's Christmas Pudding Club had commenced!' What did it mean? Was it a blunder? Was Wilkins an unlettered man and had mistaken this monstrously unseasonable placard for one concerning 'lump-sugar for preserving, or that stack of pine-apples just delivered? Was he a relative of the grocer—a lunatic—who, availing himself of the lethargy which had seized on this household in common with every other, had escaped from his room and was now amusing himself among the stock? In either case it was only a humane act to step in and speak about it.

As, prepared for the worst, I entered the shop, there was, however, nothing wild in Mr. Wilkins's demeanour, and the nimble leap he made from the window was not accompanied by a maniac howl, but by the calmest and most business-like inquiry as to what I wanted. Half a pound of figs, I told him.

'You commence your Christmas Club rather early this year,' I ventured, indicating by a glance what I alluded to.

'Same as last year, sir,' replied Mr. Wilkins, 'same as all the years since I've been here, which is nine. Eighteen weeks is the length it runs, you know, sir. Geese run less, I believe. Pr'aps it was geese you was thinking of, sir?'

'No,' I replied, driven back to the suspicion that after all Mr. Wilkins could not possibly be right in his head; 'I was *not* thinking of geese. Why should I?'

'Only as being a feature of the subject, and it being so easy to mix things wrongly; at least, it is so with me,' replied the grocer, amiably; 'that, and some of the features running long and others running short. Take geese. If single, they run but fourteen or, at the outside, fifteen weeks; but if a bottle of gin or rum goes with 'em, which, since the public have taken them up, is most common, they'll run just as long as a pudding, as a moment's calculation will show you they must—goose six-and-six, gin two-and-six, and there you are. Did you belong to our club last year, sir?'

I was obliged to confess that I did not, but excused myself on the ground that I was ignorant of its existence.

'Best thing out, for a man with a family,' returned the grocer, briskly, and furtively taking my measure as a family man, 'or *not* with a family,' continued he, influenced, probably, by the inspection; 'because you see he may pay as low as threepence a week, which ain't missed, and tells up in the end, and comes in useful to the young and married with a small or no family, or single and living in lodgings, perhaps?'

'He wouldn't want four-and-sixpence worth of pudding,' I remarked, shirking Mr. Wilkins's bland interrogatory.

'He would not, sir,' replied Mr. Wilkins, 'and what is more, he would be a foolish young man to be tied to it. But in *our* club he is *not* tied to it. He haves it out in what he likes and when he likes. I ain't got my this year's bills in yet,' continued he, ducking down to search for something under the counter, and evidently resolved on enrolling me a member of his pudding club. 'I ain't got a new bill; but if I can find an old 'un, you'll be able to see all about it.'

I had gone too far to retreat handsomely, and my only chance was, that he might *not* find an 'old 'un.' But he did, and produced it with his face so red, and his white shirt-sleeves so grimed with dust through battling with the stowage among which the 'old 'un' was found, that it would have been a cruel thing to have treated it with unconcern. As he had said, by aid of the little handbill you were enabled to see all about it. You saw that in Wilkins's 'Annual Christmas Pudding Club' you might, by a weekly payment of sixpence for the term of eighteen weeks, insure the delivery on Christmas-eve of the following good things:—

	s.	d.
4 lbs. finest Valencias	1	8
3 lbs. Patras Currants	1	3
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Candied Peel	0	5
1 oz. Allspice	0	4
$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Nutmegs	0	2
4 lbs. Moist Sugar	1	6

	s.	d.
2 lbs. Sparkling Lump .	1	0
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Best Tea (black or mixed)	2	0
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Coffee	0	8
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	9	0

Threepence per week secures half the
above quantity.

To this last line Mr. Wilkins directed my especial attention. However, I went in for the full amount, and having received my initiation card, on which the contribution was duly inscribed, I pocketed it, and then, being in no hurry, and seeing that he was inclined for a chat, I broke into the fig parcel, and we fell to talking on Christmas clubs generally.

One of the first things I learnt from Mr. Wilkins's conversation was, that I never was more wrong in my life than when I supposed that Mr. Wilkins's brain was affected. On the contrary, he was about as shrewd a person as one could wish to deal with. He was born in Whitechapel, and bred in Whitechapel, and knew the ways and means of that mysterious parish completely. He was not a little proud of his knowledge, and try how you might to pin him to the subject you took most interest in, he would break away at the smallest opportunity, and talk about the Jews in Cutler Street, the thieves in Little Keate Street, and the colony of German window-menders in Back Church Lane. Not that it was his ignorance of the Christmas Club question which made him shy of it. 'The Cock and Bottle' in Cable Street was kept by his brother, who was among the earliest promoters of 'Gin and Goose' clubs; a young man who was keeping company with his sister was barman at Whistler's, the 'Bell and Spiggot' down by the old church, where the 'Leviathan Christmas Sweep' was held. Of the existence of sucking-pig and leg of pork clubs he was well aware, but his experience of them was small, being limited, indeed, to having once joined one in a neighbourly way; and, never dreaming it necessary to examine the

rules of the club, was trapped into a most villanous bargain in consequence. The name and address of the wrong-doer I have forgotten (though both were cheerfully confided to me by Mr. Wilkins), but it happened in this way. The pigs were guaranteed to be ten-pound pigs, at least; were to be drawn for by ticket, and the excess weight of any pig to be paid for at the rate of tenpence per pound. The pig Mr. Wilkins drew weighed a little short of five stone; nevertheless, the porkman kept the grocer to his bargain, would hear of no compromise, and twice a day, for the space of a week, delivered the pig on to the grocer's counter, who as many times returned it; till at last being, as he observed, sick and tired of the sight and smell of it, he, in a fit of exasperation, pitched it into the road; being afterwards sued to the county court by the porkman and condemned in debt and costs.

By way of soothing Mr. Wilkins's feelings, ruffled by the unpleasant reminiscence, I reverted to his own club, and inquired concerning the average number of members who joined it. To my surprise he replied, 'Between three and four hundred.'

'That's the number that *join*, you understand, not the number that keeps up their payments. Bless your soul, it ain't one in three that does. Height of summer, you know, plenty of work; Saturday night; she with the lamb and the peas and the Kentish cherries loading her basket, he with both his hands in his pockets, big as bull beef. "Hey! why here's Wilkins's puddin' club commenced! We'll join that this year, anyhow, John!" So they join, and pay their first sixpence. So they do the next week, and four or five more p'raps, till the weather begins to break. Then it's a miss. Then it's threepence. Then it's another miss—a whole lot of 'em. Then it's. "Please Mr. Wilkins, mother says may she have half an ounce of tea and a quarter of a pound of sugar off her puddin' card?" So it goes in dribs and drabs, and come Christmas, they ain't got a penn'orth to draw on.'

'So that, after all,' I remark, 'it

is only the well-to-do people that you retain in your club.'

'No, no; there you're wrong,' explains the grocer. 'Say I keep a hundred all through, how will they be divided? Say, twenty comfortably-off people, who can spare sixpence, and join for the fun of the thing, as one may say; say, well, forty regular-wages people, who can pay their sixpences with only just a little pinching; and the rest—the other forty, and there'll be full that—of the sort to whom the pudding-club is the greatest blessing of any. You see, that is what makes all the difference between pudding-clubs and goose-clubs, and any other in the meat or drink way,' continued Mr. Wilkins, with the air of a man who feels confidence in his opinion; 'they enable the very hard-up ones—the ones with sick fathers, and the widows—to make a Christmas show, as one may say, and get over the day without being asked a lot of awkward questions by their young 'uns. When the pudding's there it's all there. It's Christmas Eve, too, as well as Christmas; for there's the plums got to be stoned, and the lemon-peel got to be chopped, and each of 'em gets a stir, and off they go to bed, though they get nothing else, certain of its being Christmas Eve, and that when they wake up it will be Christmas. Now a goose is what I call a fancy article; it wants drawing, it wants trussing, it wants carving; in fact, it wants a many things which are enough to set the working classes against it; and it's my private opinion sir, that it's curiosity, and nothing else, which keeps goose-clubs on their legs, and that as soon as every labouring man has had a try at it, sir, down they'll come. Besides, what's the goose really got to do with Christmas? that's what I could never make out,' continued Mr. Wilkins; 'why, it's anything; it's a dish for the spring, it's a dish for Michaelmas, it's a dish whenever you like to make it one; it's dooced dear, too, and there's nothing on it after you've bought it. Look here now; put the question in a fair and proper light. Take a family—one of the hard-up ones of which we were just speaking—and

make 'em chiefly boys, of from six to thirteen years of age; cut off all their prospect of having any dinner at all on Christmas, and then, on the Christmas Eve, at the very last moment, when they have nearly sat the fire out, talking about last Christmas Eve, all of a sudden ask 'em whether they would rather have a goose or a pudding to-morrow? I don't say go as far as showing them the two in a raw state to choose from, because the goose is a very tempting thing to look at, and would have the advantage; but simply say, 'Boys, which shall it be to-morrow—roast goose, or a whacking great hot plum-pudding? Why, they'd shout "Plum-pudding!" before the words were out of your mouth.'

Had I been called on to repeat Mr. Wilkins's observations on the Christmas club question at the time they were uttered, I should doubtless have been able to give them at greater length; but from the time they were addressed to me to that of my being reminded of them many weeks elapsed—eighteen, in fact. Eighteen, to the day—to the afternoon; for it was on the afternoon of August 12th when occurred that extremely hot walk through the Whitechapel Road, and here was afternoon of December 24th. How it happened that the Whitechapel business recurred to my memory on the latter date was, that turning out the accumulated stowage of my travelling pocket-book, I lit on my pudding-club card, with its solitary sixpenny subscription, entered by Mr. Wilkins, and proved by that gentleman's inimitable T. W.

My mood for musing was by no means disturbed by the chance discovery of the forgotten scrap of pasteboard. I fell to thinking on Christmas clubs generally, and specially on what the Whitechapel grocer had told me concerning his. It was growing dusk, and there was a notification on Mr. Wilkins's subscription card, that 'the goods were to be delivered on Christmas Eve.' How about the poor mothers mentioned by Mr. Wilkins—'the very hard-up sort'—who had no other means of making a show of Christmas

except by making a pudding? It was growing dusk and duskier, and the hour of the poor mothers' triumph was approaching. Very hard-up people have a habit of teasing early. It is a maxim among these poor economists of chips and candlewicks that the natural operations of eating and drinking can be performed as well without as with the assistance of the visual organs (better without, indeed, in times of dearth of butter), and therefore, in the dark months, elect to take tea 'between the lights.' So there sits poor mother on one side of the fire, and there sits father on the other. How many boys and girls there are is not certain, for you can only get a glimpse of them by the unsteady light of the fire, and they are all so quiet that you would never guess their number by the sound of their tongues. They are quiet, listening to the momentous conversation going on between mother and father. 'Oh, well, it's no use making yourself wretched about it, father,' says poor mother, 'it's nobody's business but our own, and God knows we can't help it. I'll make 'em a good big stew. It'll do 'em quite as much good.' (Even now you could not count the small fry by the sound of tongues, a simultaneous and wretched murmur being the only response.) 'Of course, that's right enough, old gal,' replies father, meekly, 'but still — stew! stew! I'll be bound there won't be another stew from here to Whitechapel Church. I say, how would this do? Suppose you was to buy a bit of beef.' 'A bit of what!' Poor mother is horrified. 'A little bit of nice flank, and go up to old Wilkins the grocer, and say that we expect a little money punctual at four o'clock on Saturday, and that if he will be kind enough to — Gad! I never see such a lot in all my life! Sure as ever I want to speak in private to your mother, there you are all eyes and ears, like — like a pack of owls!' And certainly the remonstrance was not quite undeserved, for no sooner had father commenced his suggestions concerning Mr. Wilkins — his voice subsiding to a whisper as he proceeded — than up rose a crop of eager

faces, hopefully, fearfully agape to know how mother would take the precious hint. Cowed by father's short though energetic address, they duck down instantly into their corners and on to their stools, and fix their eyes on poor mother's face in blank dismay as she delivers herself most unmistakeably on the subject of going trust for a Christmas pudding. She'd sooner eat dry bread!

Then ensues a general silence of anything but a cheerful character. Discontent marks the countenances of the eldest of the little flock (wouldn't *they* go trust with old Wilkins!), tearful eyes and pouting the visages of the youngest; father's last slice rests on the edge of the tea-tray, with but two bites taken out of it, and his hands are plunged to the bottom of his pockets, and his air is that of a man who for two pints would have a row with somebody. Mother is silent too, but when a gassy coal spouts out a little branch of flame, you may perceive a furtive twinkle in her eye, and a suppressed smile about her closed lips which, to anyone not in the secret, would be unaccountable. I do believe that that sharp rascal Joe — aged thirteen, and the eldest — has observed it, and, what is more, that an inkling of the glorious truth is dawning on him. It is plain that it is so; his face, just now so blank, is full of meaning, and he presently utters a great sigh of relief, followed by a cheerful avowal (the little hypocrite!) that he would as soon have stew to-morrow as anything: at which his mother instantly fires up, and says, 'Don't you tell lies, Joe!' So that if Joe was not assured before, he is now, beyond the shadow of a doubt.

But father doesn't see how the game is going. That brief passage of words between Joe and his mother should have opened his eyes, but it did not; indeed, although he is too subdued at present to enter into an argument, he cannot help thinking that it was very kind of Joe to say that he would as soon have stew as anything for his Christmas dinner, and that it was very unkind of his mother to snub him. Mothers are

such acute creatures; she observes this, and feels fit to knock Joe's head off. 'Never mind, father,' says she, 'get on with your tea; something will turn up, I dare say.' Whereon father, who discerns in her tone a touch of relenting, thinks that she has made up her mind to ask old Wilkins credit for plums and currants, and not only finishes his cup, but allows just another half-cup, and this little bottom crust to be pressed on him. Then rising and requesting of mother a penny to get a shave with, he receives sixpence instead, with a little squeeze of the hand, and an intimation that he may as well go round to the 'George' and smoke his pipe for an hour or so. Does not this awaken him? Does it not flash to his recollection that Christmas four years ago, when he came out of 'Guy's,' after lying there seven weeks, that she allowed matters to take pretty much the same course as she now had, and that after all——. There is an expression on father's face which betrays him; yet for the best pound that ever was coined he would not now declare it. He only returns the little squeeze, and mutters 'Bless your heart, old gal,' under his breath, and then puts on his cap and goes off, turning back at the door, by-the-by, to observe to Joe, 'Let us have none of your jolly nonsense, young fellow, about minding the baby while your mother goes out; you'll never get such another mother, I can tell you.'

What is mother's grand secret? *She is the possessor of a paid-up pudding card!* On the evening of the very August day on which I had conversed with Mr. Wilkins, she too had passed his shop on her return from taking home her shoebinding. The first glance at Wilkins's pudding bill instantly brought back to her mind the terrible struggle it was last year to tide over Christmas, as well as a solemn resolution she formed at the time, that, please God she lived, she never again would chance it, but make sure. In she went, and did as I had done. But afterwards she did what I did not do, and what I am afraid I should never find the courage to do, even

though placed as she is—she kept up her payments. Nobody was the poorer: all through the autumn, and into the winter as far as it had gone, she had stitched just for one half-hour longer than usual every day, and that turned in the precious sixpence unknown to anyone, including even Joe, the artful one. Nor was this as difficult to manage as at first may seem. Joseph might make free with drawers, he might even buy a starling, and conceal the bird through an entire week in his father's Sunday hat; but there was one repository he never dare invade, and that was the china butter-boat on the top dresser-shelf; and indeed it would have been hard if he could not keep his mischievous fingers out of this, seeing that its chief contents were mother's marriage certificate, her pawn tickets, and the seven little packets, each containing baby's hair. Under these—under the marriage-certificate even—the pudding-card had lain, never taken out except to be carried to the grocer's, and now it rests in mother's pocket, beautifully signed, 'Paid in full, T. WILKINS.'

Only that it had begun to snow, and Whitechapel is such a very long way from Hornsey, I should like to have gone as far as Wilkins's, and seen how mother looked as she came out of the shop laden with her bulky parcel of grocery. Indeed, to tell the truth, I did get on the omnibus for that purpose, but my heart failed me when I got as far as the Angel, and there I got down and took my way through Goswell Street, thinking there might possibly be pudding clubs in that neighbourhood. And so there were, half a dozen of them, as was to be seen by the placards in the windows. But here my satisfaction ended. You could not, unless you went right into the crowded shop, and mixed with the customers, tell which were ready-money ones and which were club members. I was a little disappointed at this; but when I reflected what a proud person poor mother was, and that she would be the last person to like the public at large to know of her secret, it certainly seemed quite as well as it was.

CHRISTMAS IN LONDON BOHEMIA;

OR

The 'Outsider's' Story.

CHAPTER I.

LAST Christmas Eve, as the clock struck nine, I, a poor forlorn being, was leaning on the cold area rails of a house not the length of a comet's tail from Oxford Street, and gazing with wistful eyes on the white window-blind of the room before me. From that room came the merry sound of children's laughter, and the occasional notes of a piano, played with that delicious disregard of time which tells of artless youthful fingers; while on the blind was cast a

phantasmagoria of moving shadow, among which was one of a slender and graceful young girl, whose long ringlets tossed wildly on her shoulders, as she romped merrily about with the laughing children.

Before these sights and sounds arrested my attention, I had been strolling slowly down the street, in my usual lonely fashion, with hands buried deep in my trousers pockets; and now as I stood, suspected of policemen, outside those cold area

railings, like the Peri at the gate of Paradise, I could not help recalling, with somewhat of a morbid pleasure, the history of my dull, uneventful life; and thinking, with a self-mocking smile, not unmixed with a few irrepressible self-pitying tears, of the hard fate which had made me through life such a poor miserable outsider.

Yes, that's exactly what I was, and am,—an outsider, a rank outsider; such an outsider that the utmost powers of the numeration-table are inadequate to express the odds against me on any conceivable event! I have been an outsider from my birth, which most useless and uncalled-for affair took place at Berwick-on-Tweed, on the twenty-ninth of February—a day which, three times out of the four, is shut out of the year altogether. I was one of a brace of twins, the first-born of our parents, who had married on the principle that two negatives make an affirmative, and that therefore, they, whose incomes were both of the negative sort, would be able to get on very well by putting them together. If my brother had come into the world alone, it would not have been so much to grumble about, but I was one too many; and my mother, not being strong, could not manage us both; so my brother was kept at home, while I was put out to nurse. Perhaps this was, after all, not a bad arrangement for me, supposing I had any business in the world at all; for my mother and brother were soon both in their graves, while I grew up a strong healthy child, with wonderful lungs and appetite. Indeed, my nurse has since told me that I was a 'regular out-and-outer to stuff and to roar.' Soon my father married again, and had a large family by his second wife; so it is scarcely necessary to say how literally I was an outsider, as far as the paternal home was concerned, ever after.

At an early age I was sent to school in one of the Channel Islands; but my bills not being paid with anything like regularity, I was always out of favour with the masters; and being constantly out at elbows, and out of pocket-money, I was

pretty nearly sent to Coventry by the boys, who never admitted me to any of their sports, except cricket, where I was always put to fag out as long stop, with a kick for every ball I let go past me. I scarcely ever got an innings; and if I did, I was invariably out in some mysterious manner, at the very first ball. It may be supposed that my school-life was not a very happy one, and I was not sorry when I was removed, and placed in a merchant's counting-house; but I did not learn much of the system of commercial transactions, for nobody took the trouble to teach me anything; and I was only stuck in an outside office just to answer a question, and occasionally to step out on an errand. An old uncle of my mother's, however, took pity on me, and sent me to a private tutor, and afterwards to college; but he died before I had been there long, and, no more funds being forthcoming, I had to leave without taking a degree. Of course it was found that I had been left altogether out of his will.

Since that time I have been constantly buzzing about, like a fly knocking its head against a window-pane (except that the fly is generally inside), for ever trying to get into some charmed circle or other, but always without success. Recently, however, I did find what I fancied was a bit of an opening. I got an engagement as a commercial traveller to solicit orders for an article of universal domestic consumption. Now, I thought, I was all right. 'An article of universal domestic consumption!' Nothing outsidied about that, at all events. But alas! I soon found that I was an outsider, travelling for a firm of outsiders; and that, though I did profess to sell an article of universal domestic consumption, the great firm of Messrs. Gog and Magog of Gresham Street was in the same line: and they were the original manufacturers of the article, and their name was up for it, and they could sell it as cheaply as I could, and people wouldn't have it unless it bore Messrs. Gog and Magog's mark, to counterfeit which was forgery: and Mr. Magog himself took the same

ground that I did, having at his command an unlimited amount of travelling expenses, and had done so for twenty years; and he was intimate with the customers, and brought presents to their wives, and knew the names of all their children, and stood godfather to their babies, and had the customers to the hotel to drink port wine and brandy and water with him, regardless of expense or his apoplectic tendencies: while poor I could seldom penetrate beyond the clerk or shopman; and when I did, the most civil reply that I got was, that they were really very well served, and were not likely to change. And Mr. Magog ignored me in public, and ridiculed me in the commercial room when I was absent, and withered me when I was present, and, in point of fact, shut me up altogether. To be sure, my commercial career may be considered a success in one way of looking at it, for as I took no orders, I made no bad debts; but my employers didn't seem to see it; and when I returned to town, I got an intimation that I must 'put the screw on a little more,' or look out for another situation. Such were my worldly position and prospects on the night when I stood in moody meditation outside those iron area railings.

But it was socially that the shoe pinched most. I was friendly enough with plenty of fellows when I met them in the street; but somehow nobody with any womankind belonging to him ever invited me to his house. And yet there was nothing disreputable about me, upon my honour! only outsidiness—nothing more! And if I dined frugally I always took care to have good coats to wear—or at all events, I always paid the outside price for them. I had a susceptible, loving heart too, ready and longing to fall in love with some pretty and amiable girl; but none such had I among my acquaintance, from whom I could beg the acceptance of such a trifle. Best so, the reader may say, under the circumstances; but after all, it was hard to stroll in moody solitude about Bushy Park or Kew Gardens, or through some green

country lane, and watch the tantalizing bits of love-making that are for ever and ever going on:—bitter, too, to stand thus in the cold street, listening to sweet voices blending in the song within, to hear the merry ringing laugh which indicates blind-man's-buff, and, above all, to watch that graceful shadow with the long thick ringlets, as it flitted quickly across the blind. Ah! what rapture would it have been to have felt the slightest touch of those gaily tossing curls! to have clasped, but for one moment, that slender waist! to have warmed my chilled heart in the fire of those bright eyes which were hidden from my gaze! to have——

I suppose I must have been speaking my thoughts aloud, for here I felt a slap on the back which caused me to start so as nearly to impale my chin on the spear-headed railing; and turning around, I saw my old friend Boulter, the artist.

'Halloa, Mackintosh, my boy!' he said, 'what was that I heard about slender waists, and lovely ringlets, and the fire of bright eyes? Whom are you speaking about, eh?'

'Well, to tell the truth,' I replied, 'I was lamenting my sad fate in being such a poor forlorn outsider; and thinking how much I should like to know that lovely girl whose shadow you see on the blind there. I have never seen more of her than that shadow, and yet I declare I am half in love with her already.'

'By Jove!' cried Boulter, 'Mackintosh is in love with the shadow of Miss Skinner! Well, that is a good one! I positively shouldn't have believed that Miss Skinner could have cast a shadow! Slender waist? I should think so! Why she's nothing but skin and bone: not an ounce of flesh about her. Fact, if I know anything of the human figure. Ringlets? Ah, they are beauties! Redder than carrots, my boy, redder than cochineal, redder than prawns from the Red Sea! True, as I'm a colorist. Fire of her eyes? Now listen, Mackintosh! The lines of fire of her two eyes converge at a point exactly ten and decimal three-seven inches in front of her nose. I have calculated the angle, and can speak

to a nicety. Exactly ten and decimal three-seven inches, if I'm a mathematician and know anything of perspective. Never saw such a squint in my life. But come along. Don't stand mooning here! I've a snug little party spending Christmas Eve in my studio over the way. All outsiders like yourself, every one. Join us,—you'll be quite at home. Just now they're having a rubber. I've come out on an expedition in search of beer; and, with some difficulty, have just succeeded in despatching a couple of pots in the right direction. By the way, you don't happen to have credit at any of the publics about here, do you? No? Then *have* you got such a thing as a crown that you don't particularly want for a day or two? It shall be most religiously returned. Thank you, my boy — you're a brick! Now that coin is worth a fabulous amount at this present crisis. Just follow me for a moment.'

And we stepped into the 'Feathers' public-house at the corner.

'Now, sir,' said Boulter to the barman, 'oblige me by rubbing out that trifling score on the slate, and sending over two pots of Cooper to my rooms every twenty minutes until ten forty. At that time precisely you will substitute egg-flip for Cooper, and continue sending until further orders. Come along, Mackintosh.'

We crossed the street, entered a rather dingy door, ascended a very dingy staircase, and passed along a dark passage to a room at the back of the house, whence proceeded an exceedingly strong smell of tobacco-smoke.

'By Jingo!' cried Boulter, 'ain't they punishing my Cavendish!' and, throwing open the door, he spouted—

'I knew by the smoke that so gracefully curled
O'er the bowls of the pipes, that some baccy
was near;
And I said, "If there's beer to be found in this
world,
The soul that is thirsty may hope for it here."'

'Gentlemen, allow me to introduce my friend Mackintosh, an outsider like ourselves. Mackintosh, I told you that we were all outsiders, and you shall judge whether I spoke the

truth. This gentleman on the box-seat is Clogg, the dramatic author. Perhaps his name is not familiar to your ears? I suppose not. He has written a play which has been sent to every theatre in London, and has come back from all, looking on each return more dirty, dogs-eared, beaten, and hopeless than before. The number of hours he has spent in hanging about the various stage-doors is something wonderful. I believe he has never been able to see any of the managers, but he could tell you to a nicety which of the stage-door keepers likes his half-a-go of gin hot, which prefers it cold, and which takes it neat. His partner is Scraper, an actor. He says he has achieved a success in the provinces, but somehow he cannot get an engagement in London. His acquaintance with stage-doors is nearly equal to that of Clogg, and it was at one of those gorgeous saloons that the two met, swore a friendship, and sealed it in beer at the neighbouring bar. That meeting, sir, will, at some exceedingly remote period, be a subject for a great historical picture. This gentleman is Tom Peel, who writes for the magazines. Yes, that is correct, as far as his intentions are concerned. He writes for them, but unfortunately they won't print for him. He could tell you which of them returns manuscripts with a polite intimation that they are not suited to the speciality of the magazine, which more coldly and briefly signifies that they are "declined with thanks," and which still more coldly gives the undesired information that they are left at the office to be called for. But as to their method of sending proofs or paying for accepted contributions he cannot say a word. This other gentleman is Barker, a surgeon, who has been out two or three times to the Antipodes as a ship's doctor, but who has never had a patient here, except Clogg, for whom he once pulled out a tooth, an exploit for which he has never been paid to the present day. Myself you know. I am a painter who have never sold a picture, and to whom the Hanging Committee, out of sheer envy, always refuses a place in the Academy. Now you know us all.

No, stay! there's Nigger, Peel's dog. The poor brute has neither scent, speed, nor teeth; he has no idea of a gun, and does not know a fox from a sheep. He has a horror of the water, and sleeps all night with the sound repose conferred by a good conscience. Too big for a drawing-room, and too hungry for a kitchen, among us alone is he admitted. We all have a fellow-feeling for him, and he is, in fact, one of us. Now then you know us all. The supply of beer is provided for, and baccy is here in abundance. What more can man desire, in a jovial point of view? Nothing. Drink, then, smoke, and be jolly.'

So Boulter and I looked on for a time whilst the others played their rubber, which was nominally for twenty-guinea points, and which seemed to cause quite as much interest as if it had been really for those heavy stakes. After the cards we talked, and laughed, and sang, and made speeches, wherein we chaffed and glorified each other amazingly, and spoke in the most disparaging way possible of all persons who had been successful in any pursuit, proving to our own satisfaction that success was almost invariably the effect of impudence and ignorance combined. How Boulter pulled to pieces the pictures of the year! How severe Clogg was on that trashy piece which was having such a run at the Theatre Royal So-and-so! How Scraper laughed at the pronunciation of this supposed great actor and mimicked the ranting of that! How sarcastic Peel was on the exceeding mildness of one magazine and the pointless tales in the other! What good stories Barker told us of the gross ignorance of some eminent surgeons whom the deluded world, as usual, would obstinately believe in! How I made my friends laugh by giving some instances of Mr. Magog's contempt of grammar and exceeding fondness for haspirating his vowels; and how poor Nigger gave short barks in his sleep, dreaming, probably, that he saw some unworthy but lucky dog unjustly possessed of a bone! Then, too, we made the most slashing jokes about muslins and laces, and

mistletoes and light fantastic toes, and the absurdities of female society generally; and vowed that the rich colour spreading on the meerschaum bowl was far lovelier in our eyes than the blush mantling on the cheek of woman. Boulter was especially great at this, and I almost feel inclined to regret that want of space, and want of power to remember the point of his jokes, prevent my giving here some of those brilliant but severe witticisms. We sneered at cigars, too, as unworthy of men, and vowed that the finest wines were not to be compared to a draught of beer from the honest pewter. Well, it was a jolly evening I must say, and to me, perhaps, especially so. I forgot my outsideness—or rather, for the time, I gloried in it—and when, at twelve o'clock, we shook hands all around, wishing each other a merry Christmas and a happy new year, I had but one regret, which was that I had to leave town in a day or two on one of my hopeless journeys, and that I should not meet my friends again for some months. As we said good-night, I discovered that I had lost my purse, but as it contained but a couple of shillings this did not much matter. We fancied that I might have dropped it as I was giving Boulter the crown piece, and we went over the way to look for it, but nothing could be seen. Boulter said it might have fallen down the area, and promised that he would look for it in the morning. And so we parted.

On the next day but one Boulter sent to me the five shillings which he had borrowed, and the purse with its contents, which he had found; and on the next day to this I left London to call on all the shopkeepers in the general line throughout the north of England, Scotland, and the midland counties. This occupied me many months, and when I returned—but now I come to the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

I divide this short narrative into two chapters because the division assists the mind in passing over an interval of time. If the reader is in

the habit of attending the theatres he is accustomed to leaping over twenty years or so between the acts, therefore it is to be hoped that a little hop of a few months won't trouble him much.

When I came back from this journey I found myself in greater disgrace than ever. The head of the firm told me that I didn't seem to be a 'pushing man,' and that I hadn't put on the screw as desired; thereupon we joined issue and had a row, which ended by my taking a leaf from the book of Coriolanus and dismissing my employers then and there.

With a heart longing for sympathy and for such an evening as the last, I went away to Boulter's, fancying, I believe, that I was going to meet the same jovial fellows as before, and that in their society my heart would be again lightened of its burden. Scenes where we have spent happy hours are deeply impressed upon our minds. No other aspect seems possible for them, and we go to them again expecting to find everything unchanged. Who has ever so found it? Reason is not to be blamed in this, for we don't trouble it in the matter at all. The picture is in our minds, and there we are content to let it stay.

When I got to Boulter's door I found a cab waiting outside, and just as I was going to knock, the door was opened and Boulter himself came forth. Yes, it was Boulter, but, oh, how changed! His formerly somewhat rough-and-ready costume had made way for what was really a display of high art on the part of some gifted tailor; his hat and boots were the perfection of glossiness; his hands had been dyed a delicate lemon colour, or else he wore gloves which fitted him like his very skin; his beard and moustache were so trimmed that not a hair could complain of being unjustly overlooked; and as he moved he did not taint the atmosphere with odours of beer, but, on the contrary, his presence gently diffused through the circumambient air a delicate and ineffable perfume.

I was so astonished that I stood staring and speechless; but Boulter

appeared glad to see me, notwithstanding his metamorphosis, and said in his own cheery voice—

'How dy'e do, Mackintosh? I'm glad to see you. So you've got back at last. I'm really sorry I can't stop with you now, but I have an engagement. I'm going to escort two ladies to the Opera, and time's up.'

'Two ladies to the Opera? Heavens, Boulter! what horrid change has come over you? You going to the Opera with ladies!'

'Well, the fact is,' said he, 'that I'm going to be married to one of them; and I believe I may say that next Monday will see me the happiest of men.'

'Married? and to whom then?'

'To a young lady of the name of Skinner, who used to live with her uncle nearly opposite. By the way, it was outside their house that I met you last Christmas Eve.'

'What!' I blundered out in my astonishment, 'Miss Skinner! The young lady whose shadow [was on the blind? Why you told me she was nothing but skin and bone!'

'Nonsense, Mackintosh, I never could have said that.'

'You did though.'

'Well, I had been studying anatomy a good deal about that time—I suppose that accounts for it; but she has a charming girlish figure, rather slim and slender I admit, but not too much so for my taste. Besides, she has filled out considerably since then. Really she is a most lovely girl. Mackintosh, you never saw such beautiful hair in your life.'

'Why you told me it was red!'

'Auburn.'

'Red.'

'Auburn.'

'Redder, you said, than carrots, redder than cochineal, redder than prawns from the Red Sea!'

'Bless me! Could I have said so? I remember I was painting my picture with that fine sunset effect just then. Perhaps my eyes were dazzled. But at any rate, her hair is the most glorious auburn—the very colour for a painter's dream. But even if it had been red, you would forget it on seeing her eyes. Oh, Mackintosh, my boy, such eyes! such magnificent eyes!'

' The lines of fire of her two eyes converge at a point exactly ten and decimal three-seven inches in front of her nose. You said so.'

' Feet, I said.'

' Inches.'

' Feet.'

' Inches.'

' Well then, it should be feet. Besides, I found out afterwards that in my calculations I had made the trivial error of misplacing the decimal point, and that the point of convergence was a hundred and three feet from her nose, not ten feet, or inches as you say. Such an angle as that is of course quite inappreciable. Besides, Mackintosh, she has eight thousand pounds of her own; what do you think of that? Not that it makes the slightest difference to my feelings, you know, not the least in the world, but one can't ignore the fact.'

' Eight thousand pounds! I congratulate you, Boulter.'

' Yes; and my acquaintance with her has been advantageous to me in another way. Her uncle turned out to be quite a connoisseur in painting. He saw my pictures and had the good taste to appreciate them, introduced me to several rich patrons of art, and now I have more commissions than I can find time to execute.'

' How fortunate! I am really very glad to hear it.' I said this honestly, but still with some little regret. Boulter, I saw, had slipped through my fingers, but I thought of our other friends, and said—

' And how about Clogg and the rest? *In statu quo*, I suppose?'

' Why, not exactly. It's a most remarkable affair altogether. When things began to move on with us they kept it up. Some time ago I became acquainted with the manager of one of the leading theatres by means of selling him a little picture. I introduced Clogg to him. He gave Clogg a suggestion for a drama: Clogg wrote it, and it was brought out at the theatre with unbounded success. There's a sensation scene in it which draws all London. Clogg, sir, is on the high road to wealth and fame. More than that, he put a character into the piece exactly

suited to Scrapper, and stipulated that Scrapper should play it. Scrapper made a wonderful hit, and will one day be at the top of his profession. Mixing up a good deal now with literary men, Clogg and Scrapper interceded for Peel with the editor of a magazine, who now takes all Peel's articles and pays him pretty well for them. Having begun with one, he soon got admission to two or three more, and is now doing well; and Nigger knows what dinner means.'

' And what of Barker?'

' Barker is no exception to the general rule. Having nothing else to do he accompanied me in a cab one day to Lord Emtor's house with a picture I was taking there. Just as we got to the gate his lordship's carriage was coming out. The horses took fright at something, and the old coachman was thrown off and had his leg broken. As he had been in the family all his life, and was a great favourite, his lordship would not have him taken to the hospital, but had him back in the house. Barker was on the spot; Barker set the bone; and his skill and attention made such a wonderful cure, that the old fellow can walk now better than ever he could in his life before. The wildest dreams of his youth had never imagined such a leg as he has got now! He is thinking seriously of breaking the other also, and getting Barker to mend it. Lord Emtor was so pleased that he took a deal of notice of Barker, introduced him everywhere, and laid the foundation of a practice that will soon be a very lucrative one.'

' Well; it is wonderful! But how did you become engaged to Miss Skinner?'

' Why it was all owing to you, now I think of it. Don't you know you lost your purse down the area? Well, I went there in the morning to look for it. As it happened, Miss Skinner was there when I knocked. We searched together and found—not only your purse but the happiness of our lives! Nice sentiment that, isn't it?'

' So it was all owing to me, then, after all!'

' All owing to you, my boy. But

how are *you* getting on? Well, I hope. No? What a pity you were not here to share in our good luck! Never mind, yours will come some day. But good-bye! my time is up. Call on us when we come back from Switzerland. Peel can give you the address. No cards, you know. Good evening!

And he drove off. I was not envious of my friends' good fortune, but I felt abandoned. One short anecdote and I have done. One day, some years ago, I went with a party of friends to catch an excursion train for which we had purchased tickets on the day before. Being late, we found the doors of the station closed,

but by a bribe (from my pocket) they were opened to us just as the train was moving off. We all made a rush to get in, and my friends succeeded, but the carriage that I selected was locked, and the train moved off leaving me alone on the platform.

As were my feelings then, so were they, though more intense, after my interview with Boulter. As a relief I went to my humble abode and penned this brief narrative. Should it ever meet a reader's eye, that reader, if benevolent, will rejoice, for he will know that things have taken a turn with me, and that I have at last been admitted somewhere!

A LIFE OF FLOWERS.

A PLEA FOR CHRISTMAS MEDITATION.

'There's rue for you; and here's some for me . . . You may wear your rue with a difference.'—*Hamlet*.

SEE—on the cold damp flags,
 Wherever my lady flits—
 A flower-girl, huddled up in her rags,
 Fallen asleep where she sits!
 Well may your ladyship stop,
 The sight has a wild, weird charm—
 Look in the basket ready to drop
 Down from the listless arm.

Violets—under the gas!—
 Faded, flaccid, and dead,
 O'erblown roses waning,—alas!
 Lilies hanging the head;—
 Seeming meet types of her face,
 Haggard with hunger and care;
 Just the wrecks of girlhood and grace
 Drifting—who can tell where?

Worn with the weary walking of hours,
 Penniless pitiful slave,
 See—she sleeps, unconscious of flowers,
 As if they grew over her grave!
 There—in the cold and damp,
 There—in the drizzle and blast,
 What does she care for the flare of the lamp?
 Is it not rest—come at last!

If it were only so deep,
 Hunger disturbed not its dreams!
 Over her there in her sleep, .
 See, as the sickly light gleams,
 Hollow and pallid her cheek—
 Hers, who lies starkly below:
 But round, rosy-tinted, and sleek,
 Hers—gazing down on her now!

Near ;—yet how far apart !
 View them, oh, pitying Powers,—
 Each with her tender woman's heart—
 Each with her life of flowers :—
 Flowers—strewn in one's happy path,
 Garlands for waist and for head :—
 Tell me what to the other, I pray !
 Things not for beauty but bread !

Flowers, that the poets have sung,
 Flowers, that the west wind has wooed,
 Flowers that the bees have been busy among,
 Hummed round, and hymned-to, and sued,—
 Flowers—e'en those commonest sweets
 Nature to earth does entrust !
 Yet—to this hapless waif of the streets,
 Meaning simply—a crust !

Well, you may snatch back your dress,
 Lady, lest contact defile,
 Yet may the heavens your loveliness bless,
 Just for that womanly smile :
 Sorrowful ! Go—get you in,
 Sit down and sigh for despair :
 What can we do for a world full of sin,
 Suffering, sorrow, and care !

Under the flaring lamp,
 Out in the midnight street,
 Where the air is stilly, chilly, and damp,
 Look at the two, how they meet !
 How many meet so—and part—
 Here in this world of ours,
 Each with her tender woman's heart,
 Each with her life of flowers ?

T. H.

CHRISTMAS IN BELGRAVIA ;

OR,

Miss Lumley's Christmas Gift.

IT was Christmas Eve, and the weather was as perversely unseasonable as it has often chosen to be, of late years. The day was sunless and breezeless—chilly, but not cold—close, yet not warm. London looked dismal indeed, in an atmosphere of smoky fog—not dense enough to be exciting—through which, muddy pavements, dingy houses, and ill-clad people looked specially muddy, dingy, and wretched.

In the principal thoroughfares, however, the passengers were chiefly well-dressed, and the shop-windows did their best to enliven the gloom,

and looked attractively gay in spite of unfavourable atmospheric conditions. The drapers' show of silks and shawls made quite a blaze of colour every here and there ; and the jewellers had set forth an endless variety of ornaments—glowing gold cunningly wrought into divers fashions of chain, and clasp, and pendant, for fair arms, and necks, and brows. Not for a moment to be ignored, either, were the other sort of 'toy-shops.' These shops might well be the species of terrestrial paradise they evidently were to multitudes of eager little investigators who crowded round to view the out-

side show, or happier still, thronged the interior of the bewilderingly blissful emporium.

Truly, one might almost have forgotten the ungenial influences of the London weather while 'looking at the shops' on that December afternoon. Though you were not allowed to forget the season either, while you did so; for almost in every window might be seen placards, more or less obtrusive or insinuating, bearing the same burden—

Christmas and New-Year's Gifts.

Some one met Miss Lumley just as she was coming out of one of the furniture and upholstery warehouses, and was about to pass to the neat little brougham which awaited her across the pavement.

'Have you been choosing Christmas presents?' says to Miss Lumley the casually-encountered acquaintance, a beaming-faced young matron, with a rosy-cheeked, scarlet-cloaked little girl on either hand, whose four little hands, in turn, were laden with significant packages. 'That seems to be every one's business to-day. We have had *such* an afternoon of shops, and bazaars, and German fairs! Haven't we, Effie? Show Miss Lumley the beautiful horse you have bought with your own money for little brother Dora.'

Miss Lumley, however, appeared to be but slightly interested in the proposed exhibition, and without taking any notice of the question put to herself, rejoined by asking another.

'Do you think ——'s carpets are to be depended on as much as ——'s? I've just seen one I like at ——'s, but I can't make up my mind that the establishment is to be thoroughly relied on.'

'I believe it is, so far as durability goes. Their patterns are not thought so good, you know.'

'Oh—their patterns are not thought so good!' repeated Miss Lumley, with attentive gravity. And quite a careworn look came into her face as she paused, evidently in perplexed consideration.

'But if you've seen what you like—' suggested the other lady, and then broke away with 'Dora! Effie! There's the Waterloo omnibus!

We must run after it. Excuse—Good-bye! Good afternoon, Miss Lumley!'

And away flew the bright-faced young mother, close followed by her two darlings, while Miss Lumley entered the well-lined, softly-cushioned little coach wherein she was the only passenger, shut the door for herself, and after a pause of frowning consideration, called to her coachman to 'drive slowly up Regent Street till she pulled the check-string.'

That evening, 'when the children were asleep,' and the bright-faced little matron was working beside her husband,—the curtains drawn, lamp shining bright, books and work and pictures and open piano and one or two stray toys and dolls on the table and floor—all looking infinitely cheery and homelike,—she interpolated her narrative of all they had been doing that day, with an allusion to their encounter with Miss Lumley.

'And you know, as I thought to myself afterwards,' she concluded, 'I dare say she was not buying presents after all; but only choosing a new carpet for her drawing-room, poor thing!'

The husband laughed, and thought her compassion for the lady under these circumstances approached the sublime.

'For my part, my dear Sophy, I believe you felt inclined to envy your "poor" Miss Lumley, when you realized the business she was engaged on. The carpet warehouses of London all before her, where to choose! And heaps of cash in her pocket, and a carriage to go about in, and a sweet house in Belgravia, and bonnets and mantles and gowns, as many as she likes. Happy Miss Lumley!'

But Sophy would not laugh.

'No, I don't undervalue the advantages of "cash," as you know; but I always feel sorry, somehow, for Jane Lumley,' she averred.

'I observe you always incline to bestow much patronizing pity on your unmarried friends, both male and female. Don't apologize; I accept it as a compliment.'

'I assure you I'm very sorry for some of the married ones, too,' said

the little wife, saucily nodding her head. 'It doesn't follow that people are to be happy because they have husbands or wives; or that they need be miserable because they haven't. Of course not. But I always have been sorry for Jane Lumley, and I always shall be, I suppose. It isn't as if she had people belonging to her, or any very dear friends, as most women have. She seems to have no one who cares particularly about her, and no one that she cares particularly about—which is worse still. And so at Christmas time she goes about the shops by herself, choosing a new carpet for herself, to be put down in a room that she'll sit in by herself. Oh, it's dreadful!'

'Still, she has plenty of money. Don't forget that, practical little woman! Isn't money the key to four-fifths of this world's happiness?'

'But where's the use of a key if you have no lock to put it in? And that's just her case, I believe. Her money makes the matter worse instead of better, it seems to me. If I *must* live alone in the world, I think I should like to be poor, and always in difficulties. It would be some interest in life, at any rate; and besides, it would be a consolation when things were *very* miserable, that no one had to suffer except oneself.'

'I see. I can feebly imagine you in the character of that lonely, loveless struggler with the world. And perhaps you might be susceptible of consolation from the fact of your poverty; but I doubt very much if Miss Lumley would like to try the experiment, and part with her property in the Three per Cents. accordingly. Shall you make the suggestion to her?'

'You may laugh, but I willingly would! I mean, I could often find it in my heart to suggest that she should part with *some* of her Three per Cents., at least, to bestow them where they are more needed.'

'Give them to the poor, I suppose you mean?'

'Yes; to the poor indeed; to the poor sister the family never took any notice of after her marriage,

twelve years ago. Don't you remember, just before we were engaged, the talk there was about pretty Henrietta Lumley, who "made such a bad marriage," all her friends said?'

'I remember nothing that took place at the period you name, my love—nothing whatever! It was a blank and uninteresting portion of my life, during which I was utterly engrossed in business, no doubt.'

'Do be serious! I want to tell you about Henrietta Lumley.'

'By all means. I think I recall something of it now. She married a country tradesman, didn't she? and unpardonably outraged the gentility of her family thereby.'

'That was it. He was a worthy, well-educated young man; but the Lumleys thought so much about position, and family, and such things. They opposed the engagement; and it was only kept up in a sort of half-acknowledged way for years and years, till at last poor Hetta couldn't bear it any longer. He had a severe illness—Mr. Gray, her lover had—and he nearly died; and she was never allowed to see him—hardly to hear about him—and she *couldn't* bear it. And at last she married him, against the wishes of her family, and was tabooed accordingly. And I don't wonder at it—I mean at her marrying—I really don't. She waited six years in hopes they'd relent—and—and, I think—don't you think—she was right?'

'If I say yes, mind you never let Effie and Dora hear of it. I don't wish them to marry provincial grocers, you know.'

'Grocers! Charles Gray wasn't a grocer; he was a bookseller.'

'I beg his pardon. Still, I would rather my daughters did not wed even into eminent firms such as Longman's and Murray's rolled into one, for instance,—without their papa's consent. A father's consent is a solemn thing, you see; and in the case of Effie and Dora I am not sure I should consider a marriage legal that was solemnized without it.'

'Ah! but you'd never be so un-

reasonable as poor Hetty's father was! And after all, it was her sisters influenced him. He forgave her before he died; but they still protested, and would never visit her, or take any notice of her. And then, poor thing, trouble came on her. Her husband fell into ill health, and couldn't stay in England; and with the money that came to her at Mr. Lumley's death they emigrated to New Zealand. And they didn't succeed. And, oh! I believe they have had sad trials there. And goodness knows what has become of them now. For years I've hardly heard anything about them.'

'They are flourishing farmers, depend on it, by this time, making huge fortunes by sheep-feeding or corn-growing.'

'No; that's impossible; Mr. Gray's health hindered him from taking to anything of the kind. And I know they were in great distress a year ago, for want of money. And mamma spoke to Miss Lumley about it, who would not hear her to the end. It almost makes one hate her; only the next minute one feels sorry too, for the miserable, hardhearted, lonely, loveless old woman.'

'Old woman! She'd agree to all your epithets sooner than to the last, I expect. No, no! I protest against this evil speaking of poor Miss Lumley. A callous, cruel, hard, cold, wicked woman she may be, but not—not an *old* woman!'

'Well; she's getting old, then. Twelve years ago she was nearly forty. She was the eldest of the three sisters; and Clarissa, who died five years ago, was forty-one. Jane must be past fifty by this time; and that's not young, now, is it?'

'I'll ask you the same question, let me see, eighteen—twenty years hence, and hear what you make of it then. In such a solemn matter as that of her age, every woman should have the privilege of being tried by her peers. I won't hear your verdict on the matter.'

And as the husband resolutely declined to proceed in any more serious strain, the wife did not further pur-

sue the subject of Miss Lumley on this occasion.

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Meanwhile, Miss Lumley was also spending her Christmas Eve by her 'ain fireside.' A very different affair was the 'interior' to which we now direct our attention, however, from that we have just left. Howard Street, Belgravia, is one of those rows of small houses benignantly built within the charmed circle of an aristocratic neighbourhood. It is within a stone's throw of Belgrave Square itself, and some of the palatial chimneys of Grosvenor Place can even be seen by an adroit contortion of the neck out of the second-floor front windows. Considerate, benevolent builders, to provide accommodation for small but genteel families in such a classic locality as this! True—but that is just because the ground is so precious here—the rooms and passages and staircases of these dwellings are of the smallest, narrowest, cramped proportions. True, for the same rental, in a district even healthier and pleasanter (judging from a carnal and common point of view) than this, a house might be had with spacious chambers, lofty ceilings, broad corridors, and similar material advantages. But what a lofty superiority to such mean considerations of temporal comfort and convenience is shown by this choice of an abode, not for *what* it is, but *where* it is! To live in the odour of gentility and fashion! Here is a noble aspiration, which in these days is by some of us obeyed and followed at no matter what personal sacrifice. Let no one say that the era of voluntary martyrdom is past, while examples like this meet us at every turn.

The Lumleys had always been among these examples of people who scorn such mundane matters as comfort, convenience, or the like, while aspiring to be fashionable, and to be thought aristocratic. And not only did this theory of life influence their choice of an abode, but they carried it out in yet graver and more important directions. From small details of their domestic economy, all arranged sub-

ject to the same guiding rule, up to the most vital interests of their friendships and alliances, everything was made subservient to this grand principle. If 'gentility' were really a religion, how earnestly religious some people would be! The Lumleys, for instance, who so disinterestedly practised the faith they held; whose lives were a standing protest against utilitarian doctrines; who were ready at all times to abjure everything they most desired, from the merest present enjoyment up to the dearest happiness of the future, if it clashed with those higher interests they maintained so rigorously. 'Gentility is better than happiness' was the motto which they tacitly impressed on all belonging to them. And for the most part, they were highly consistent followers of that creed.

As, for instance, when some fluctuation in the funds (through which irreproachable medium came the Lumley income) caused, for a year or two, a diminution of the family finances, they cheerfully made themselves ill by staying in town throughout the summer, because they could not afford to go on the Continent, or to Wales, or Scotland, or the lakes, or Devonshire, or anywhere else that was *en règle* for Belgravians; and of course places more within reach, but less indubitably 'the thing,' were not to be thought of for a moment. Even in those early days, poor little Hetta had infinitely shocked her family by suggesting a sojourn at Margate or Southend, as better than staying on in choky, dusty, smoky, summer London.

But Hetta was continually offending in similar ways. She was the youngest of the family, and during some years had lost the advantage of Howard Street influences, having been placed, for her health, with an aunt in the country, who although she was, as the widow of a clergyman, a most unexceptionable connection, unhappily proved to be 'not so particular as we could wish,' the Lumleys said, with regard to her social circle and visiting list.

In fact, it was in Northamptonshire that Hetta became acquainted

with Charles Gray. If it hadn't been for Aunt Mellor's unfortunate laxity about knowing people—the orthodox members of the family often observed—that piece of mischief wouldn't have been done. When Aunt Mellor died, they fondly hoped the mischief would die with her, but it did not. Hetta clung to her first and last love as tenaciously as they did to their 'principles of what was due to their family and position.' And we know the ultimate result of this obstinate adherence, on both sides, to what each party considered the most important interests of life.

How different was the conduct of Henrietta's two sisters! *They* must have gladdened their parents' hearts by the unflinching integrity with which they maintained the family principles at any cost. Clarissa Lumley, every one knew, had two or three 'disappointments.' Her first suitor, urged by herself and her family, abandoned his moderate prospects in England for a money-making position in India, and died within the first six months of his exile. Two years afterwards, she became engaged to an officer in the army, their marriage being only postponed till he should obtain his company. A Lumley could not possibly marry below the rank of captain. But before that necessary step was attained, the regiment was ordered to Malta, and at Malta the faithless lieutenant became captivated by a rich young widow, who married him at once without waiting for the dilatory operations of the War Office. After that—but there is no need to dwell further on the history of Clarissa's matrimonial prospects, each of which in turn was ruthlessly sacrificed in heroic obedience to the guiding principle of the family life, until, after remaining a handsome young woman as long as she possibly could, she sunk into a plain and rather disagreeable old maid, as which she died some years since.

Perhaps the eldest Miss Lumley's case, however, was the hardest of all. She had never been remarkable for good looks, and throughout her life had only one lover, but

he was very steadfast and sincere. And even her own family would admit to one another that 'poor Jane really liked Mr. Weston.' He had 'liked' her from the early days of youth, when he first came to be one of the curates of the parish, and met her in the course of his district-visiting. And after some years' patient attachment, he had 'spoken.' But alas! not only was that worthy young man, though a clergyman, *not* of unimpeachable gentility as to his relations, but he had nothing in the world but his curacy to live on. A good living, it was understood, would have reconciled the family to the fact of his father having been in business, and his uncle being there still; but small means and questionable connections, both together, could not be condoned. Twice did Mr. Weston ask the fateful question. The second time was when he had just received the presentation to a small living in Herefordshire—a house, and orchard, and three hundred a year.

'I would try to make you happy, and I think I could, even on *that*,' urged the lover, looking into her eyes for a responsive gleam of tenderness.

Now Jane certainly 'liked' him, and still more certainly he was the only person who had ever seriously liked her. And this mutual liking had been going on now for seven or eight years. Grey streaks were apparent in the brown hair of the hard-working curate, and Jane herself had left her thirtieth birthday considerably behind her. Nevertheless, with sublime heroism, she turned her eyes away from meeting his, and told him that it couldn't be, they mustn't think of it. Later on, she went a little more into particulars, and said she couldn't reconcile it with her duty to her family to marry under the circumstances.

'*The circumstances!*' echoed her suitor, rather bitterly; 'you mean the three hundred a year, I suppose? It is a small income, but how many families there are living happily on quite as little.'

'Not in *our* sphere—you must be aware of that,' Miss Lumley replied,

with some dignity. 'Everything depends on the circle in which one has been accustomed to move. One must bear *that* in mind. Something must be sacrificed, if necessary, to *that*.'

'And you are ready to sacrifice to it my happiness and your own?—for I *know* I could make you happy, Jane, happier than this way of life you think so much of can ever make you. Think a little before you send me away. If you give me up for no other reason than this,' pursued the steadfast, patient man, at length aroused into something like resistance and indignation, 'I shall know what to understand, and I will never trouble you any more.'

The new rector went away in angry disappointment, and within six months married some one who evinced considerable partiality for himself and entire contentment with his circumstances. She made him what is called 'a good wife,' and he was always what is called 'an excellent husband.' But for all that, those who knew him best, always felt regretfully that something was wanting—that he never fulfilled the sturdy promise of his zealous, unmarried days. He dropped into a routine existence in his out-of-the-way country parish, fulfilling his duties in a sufficiently exemplary way to all casual observation—visiting the poor, reading to the sick, and preaching two orthodox sermons, twenty minutes long, every Sunday. And he appreciated his home, was kind to his wife, and fond of his children;—but he became middle-aged and then elderly, wonderfully soon, and a certain dried-up element rapidly developed and became manifest in his appearance and manner, his feelings and modes of thought.

While Jane Lumley sits, as her young married friend had pitifully said, 'by herself' on this evening, when social kindness and rejoicing should surely be regnant throughout Christendom,—and ponders on the new carpet she has promised herself for a Christmas present. No one else is likely to give her anything, and—at least so people say—what she gives to others is just 'no-

thing to nobody.' So, doubtless, her meditations are quite absorbed by calculations as to quantity and quality and cost, and there is no room for any other thought to intrude. Or if a vagrant idea *should* present itself, you may be sure it is only some such consideration as whom she will ask to her annual winter party, which 'comes off' in January; or she debates whether she has chosen for the best in declining to spend her Christmas with her banker's family at Richmond, and electing to dine in Russell Square with her lawyer and his fussy wife, and all their set of 'professional' people. To be sure, they always did things in very good style; still, she would certainly have preferred Richmond if it hadn't been that Rosa—the youngest girl—was such a pert little thing, and once, in her hearing, had called her—her, Miss Lumley—'a griffin!' She had half expected that the Favershams—Sir George and Lady Faversham—would have asked her to their festive gathering at their 'place' in Kent. But somehow they hadn't, and she was forced to fall back on her lawyer, who asked her every year, but to whom she only went as a *pis aller*—a fact of which that gentleman and his wife were perfectly aware. It would be dull enough, most likely; but then Christmas parties always were either dull or noisy—she was not sure if she didn't prefer the dullness to the 'racket' a parcel of young people were sure to make. At that very moment the family next door was an example of this reprehensible tendency to hilarity. The boys were home from Rugby; and they and their sisters and some 'young friends' were having an impromptu dance or something. Through the thin wall of partition she could hear, not only the pianoforte and the sound of quickly-moving feet, but snatches of merry talk and bursts of laughter. It was quite annoying. She wished she had quieter neighbours. Next door, on the other side, the family was quiet enough so far as merry-making was concerned, for one of them was seriously ill. But even that had its drawbacks, for the doc-

tor's carriage was continually rattling to and from the door, and Miss Lumley disliked *that* very much,—it reminded her of her father's and mother's last illness, and poor Clarissa's.

And so, perhaps, this is how she got into the perilous region of retrospection, and began to think of 'old times' as she leaned back in that admirably cushioned chair of hers. She was not accustomed to these kind of reveries. But the rigid face softens, and the grey eyes gleam less coldly and do not look nearly so like steel as usual while she muses this evening on 'the days that are no more.' She sees visions of the kind father and mother, the handsome sister who died, blithe but naughty little Hetta, who is on the other side of the world, and—perhaps, not least predominantly—the once devoted curate who is married, and lives equally out of her world, now. All pass before her mind's eye. These were once the foreground figures of her life, but they are all gone now. She has no one to control, contradict, or worry her; no one over whose welfare she is likely to feel the wearing pain of anxiety or the sharp anguish of apprehension. She is quite free and independent, and, as it seems, without a serious care in the world. Yet, does any one suppose that this is a happy woman?

Far from it. Most of those who know her believe her to be but a grim, discontented, gloomy-tempered person, equally uninteresting to other people as she would seem to be to herself. Nevertheless, she had the elements of better things in her.

Presently she rises from her seat, goes to her desk, and from it takes a packet of letters, apparently of various degrees of age, but all in the same handwriting. She selects the one last received. It is dated three years back, and is brief. It says—

'We feel quite sure that the money just received again comes from you, though you will never acknowledge it. Oh, sister Jane! why do you try to *seem* harder than you are? The help comes in a time of need, and I cannot but be deeply grateful for it; but if a word of love had come with it, how doubly precious it would

have been! Surely, surely my love might make *you* happier, even as yours would make me! But be it as you will. Only—my husband says, and I also, that we must not again be indebted to your charity, if you will not give us your love. We can — and will — do without the money, sister Jane. It is a word of sisterly fondness and sympathy that I am longing for in this far-away place. God bless you, I pray, and teach my children to pray, always.

‘HETTA.’

For two years Miss Lumley had left that letter unanswered, unnoticed. Then she had written—it may be remembered as a saving clause in the indictment against her—she *had* written. In some such rare moment as this present one of relenting from the usual constraint in which she carefully kept her inner life, she wrote to her sister—awkwardly and bluntly enough, yet with the awakening of the long-dormant impulses sufficiently evident to one who had the eye to see and heart to understand the poor dried-up, distorted, tightly-braced nature of its writer. And that letter was despatched a year ago. And a week ago it had come back to her across the seas, with the ominous words ‘Gone away’ scrawled across the worn, stained envelope.

‘Gone away!’ Was it indeed so? And was the last chance of something better to brighten and elevate this woman’s wasting life, gone away from her for ever? In self-defence against the growing pain of compunction, Jane Lumley tried to recall her old feeling of bitterness, not so much against her sister, as against the man who had taken her sister from her home, her family, her ‘position,’—for the miserable, worldly grievance *would* intrude even into such serious thoughts as these.

‘I never could like Charles Gray. I know we should never have got on together. Perhaps it’s as well as it is,’ she said to herself, and stubbornly held herself down to that creed, and would not let the regrets have way that were crowding on one another deep down in her heart.

And she rang the bell hastily for

candles, resolved to think no more of these things. Her face looks hard and grim as usual when the servant appears with lighted candles, and a note in her hand.

‘Please ma’am, a little boy brought this and is waiting down stairs.’

‘Some one from the carpet warehouse, I suppose,’ mutters Miss Lumley, while fumbling for her spectacles, and pulling one of the candles nearer to her, in order to read the missive.

But it is not from the carpet warehouse. It is dated from one of the poorest and most miserable of shabby London streets, and it simply says:—

‘Henrietta Gray is lying ill and in great poverty at this address. The doctor who is attending her sends this to Miss Lumley, as the only person in London whom he can discover to have any knowledge of his patient.’

The maid waits some minutes while her mistress reads this brief epistle. At last she ventures to ask, ‘Any answer, if you please ma’am?’

‘Bring me—give me—,’ says Miss Lumley, putting her hands out as if in the effort to catch hold of something. But the sound of her own voice appears to recall her scattered senses; and before the girl has time to be alarmed, she adds, clearly and peremptorily, ‘Send for a cab.’

‘Yes, ma’am. And is the boy to wait?’

‘Let the boy come—no; I’ll go down. Fetch me my bonnet. Stay—no; send the boy up to me.’

For when she rose from her chair she staggered weakly, and was compelled to sink back into it again.

‘But get—a cab—directly!’ she gasped out, after the retiring servant. And she could not stay still, even for the minute that must elapse before ‘the boy’ could come into her presence. She tottered to the door. She stood there waiting, and clenched her hands and ground her teeth together in impatience, while she heard the careful, well-taught maid impressing on the boy to ‘wipe his boots well, first.’

‘Come up! Never mind the stair carpets! Come up!’ she called out, shrilly. And when the messenger

appeared, she began her questions at once.

'Is she very ill? Has she been ill long? The lady—Mrs. Gray. Can't you speak? Don't you know anything about it?' For the boy's face looked strangely blank, and then was convulsively disturbed.

'She's been ill ever since we came to England,' he faltered, with a desperate effort to speak calmly; 'ever since my father died.'

'Your father?—dead! Who are you?' The passion in her withered face and harsh voice almost daunted the boy, old for his years as he seemed. She seized his arm, and drew him into the lighted drawing-room. 'What's your name?'

'George Lumley Gray. I'm the eldest. There's only me and little Charlie left now.'

'George Lumley!' It was her father's name that the poor exiled, disgraced daughter had given to her first-born. Inconceivably it smote the already stricken heart of the sister to hear and to see the vague likeness of pretty Hetta that lurked in the pale, troubled face of the boy. All the woman was called into life in Jane Lumley then. It might have been an everyday action with her, so readily and fondly did her arms twine round the little lad and draw him closely to her.

'You're my nephew,' she whispered: 'your mother's my own sister. God forgive me, and help us all!'

* * * *

'Only think,' said our bright young matron to her husband two or three weeks after, 'how unjust I have been all along to poor Miss Lumley! Will I ever believe ill of any one again? Never; I declare it; unless on the most hideously unmistakeable evidence.'

'Why, what's the matter, little one?' naturally followed the inquiry. 'What has your cross old lady been and done now?'

'Don't, please, don't remind me of

my past sins! I know I've called her names often enough, but I never shall again.'

'Oh! so she's only middle-aged now, then? I thought you couldn't be so cruel for long together. Has she given you that new drawing-room carpet?'

'Carpet! it's all nonsense about the carpet. I dare say she wasn't thinking about it at all, when I thought her mind was full of nothing else. She's been nursing her sister through a serious illness,—that's how she's spent her Christmas. I declare it puts me to shame.'

'My dear love! Happily your sisters are all well, and I haven't any, so I don't see how you could have emulated Miss Lumley's course of proceeding at this season.'

'It's only I'm so ashamed of my past ill thoughts of her,' cried the warmhearted little wife. 'But what does it matter? She has better things to make her happy than my good opinion; for she will have a real home, with plenty of love in it now. The Howard Street house is to be given up, and she's taken a cottage in Devonshire; and as soon as poor Mrs. Gray is sufficiently recovered, they all go down there together. She can't do enough for her widowed sister and her children, mamma says. And already she's taken her place with them all. Already she looks quite different from what she was. And we shall think of her always now, not as Miss Lumley, lonely, and cross, and selfish, and—'

'Old?' suggested the incorrigible husband.

'No. The old Miss Lumley is to be blotted out and forgotten. Now she is kind, loving, and loved "Aunt Jane." And I wish—oh, how I wish!—that all who are solitary, unloved, and unloving as she was three weeks ago, could but have such a gift as has been bestowed on her this Christmas!'

